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EU withholds signing Ukraine agreement

Tymoshenko jailing the key stumbling block

Compiled by Marco Levytsky

From reports by RFE/RL, the Ukrainian Journal and the official statement by president of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy following the 15th European Union-Ukraine Summit on Dec. 19 in Kyiv.

The European Union says negotiations between the 27-member bloc and Ukraine on an association agreement have been completed, but the signing of the document will depend on political developments in Kyiv.

European Council President Herman Van Rompuy made the statement Dec. 19 at an EU-Ukraine summit in Kyiv, which was held amid concerns about the jailing of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

"Our strong concern is primarily related to the risks of politically-motivated justice in Ukraine. The Tymoshenko trial is the most striking example. But just as important, a comprehensive justice reform in line with international standards is absolutely key. Media freedom and freedom of assembly are also key for a full fledged democracy. Shortcomings have to be corrected," he said directly addressing Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych.

"Mr. President, the respect for these principles, enshrined in the Eastern Partnership and at the core of the Association Agreement, is decisive for the pace and depth of rapprochement with the EU and of the signing and ratification of the Association Agreement. But it is also fundamental to Ukraine's future development as a competitive, dynamic and innovative society.

"In this context, the parliamentary elections to be held next year will be a litmus test. The conduct of these elections will have to meet the commitments of the OSCE, including the ensuring of a level playing field for all possible candidates. And it is of outmost importance that they can exercise their political rights," Van Rompuy said.

Nevertheless, Van Rompuy reiterated that "Ukraine is a partner of strategic importance for the EU" adding that "our commitment to developing the relationship between the EU and Ukraine is firm."

The summit, four years in preparation, had been intended to mark the start of a new strategic relationship between the EU and Ukraine, which has made European integration a priority while managing strong ties with Russia.

But during two hours of face-to-face talks with Yanukovych, Van Rompuy and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso appeared to have made little headway in persuading him to relent and bring about the release of Tymoshenko and other opponents.

Despite the setback, Yanukovych said Ukraine still saw its future in the European Union at some point. "The Association Agreement will be a key moment for the Euro-integrationist course of our state," Yanukovych told the EU leaders in televised remarks.

Tymoshenko, in a statement from jail, reaffirmed her backing for Ukraine's EU integration and accused the government of President Viktor Yanukovych of alienating the bloc because of the use of "political repression."

Any deal would still need to be ratified by parliaments of all the 27 EU states and the European Parliament before it could be implemented, a process that at best could take many months.

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Madonna and Child by Ukrainian Canadian Artist Myron Levytsky (1913 - 1993)

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Вперше до Криму прибув Віфлеємський вогонь

Володимир Притула,
Радіо Свобода

16 грудня сюди вперше до Криму прибув Віфлеємський вогонь. До Української гімназії Сімферополя його привезли місцеві пластуни. На честь цієї події над гімназією підняли велику Різдвяну зірку, зроблену сімферопольськими школярами, разом зі львівськими майстрами, які спеціально приїжджали до Криму поділитися своїм умінням.

«Христос народився, Бог воплотився, ангели співають…», – до Різдва ще далеко, але в Українській школі-гімназії Сімферополя сьогодні свято.

З Віфлеєма, де за біблійними переказами, народився Ісус Христос, до Відня його доставили австрійські скаути, а звідти в Україну привезли українські пластуни. Серед них був і сімферополець Микола Яриновський, який очолює кримську округу і створив осередок «Пласту» в Українській гімназії.

Він розповідає, що дуже поспішав до Сімферополя привезти Святий вогонь, бо потім з друзями везе його в країни Балтії, щоб там передати представникам української діаспори. За його словами, цей вогонь є символом єдності українського народу.

Тепер кожен кримчанин теж може запалити і собі Віфлеємський вогонь, каже пластун Микола Яриновський.

Вогонь привезли до Криму пластуни.

Директор Української школи-гімназії Наталя Руденко радіє, що не лише Віфлеємський вогонь уперше завітав до Криму. Вперше на цьогорічне Різдво в Сімферополі пройде ініційований гімназистами парад звіздарів.

За словами директора гімназії, торік в газеті «День» вона прочитала про такий святковий захід у Львові. «Ми цілий рік шукали людей, які б могли навчити робити Різдвяні зірки. Знайшли їх у Львові, запросили до гімназії. Тут ці майстри працювали з нашими дітьми та вчителями два тижні. Таки навчили нас робити і Різдвяний вертеп, і Різдвяні зірки», – розповіла Руденко.

З нагоди прибуття Віфлеємського вогню, найбільшу з майже два десятки Різдвяних зірок, зроблених сімферопольськими школярами, встановили на високій гімназійній вежі.

Учениця 11 класу гімназії Надя Бразнець розповідає, що гімназисти із задоволенням брали участь у створенні цих зірок і поки тут працювали львівські майстри, в гімназії навіть підвищилася успішність. Тепер школярі з нетерпінням чекають 7 січня, коли збираються провести перший Парад звіздарів, Надя Бразнець сподівається, що це стане і сімферопольською традицією.

Пластуни привезли вогонь до Балтії

Людмила Пилип, *Радіо Свобода*

У переддень Святого Миколая у країнах Балтії відбулася акція «Віфлеємський вогонь миру». Полум'я, запалене від Негасимої лампади у церкві, що стоїть на місці народження Ісуса Христа, привезли до Литви, Латвії та Естонії представники української молодіжної організації «Пласт».

У Ризі передача Віфлеємського вогню відбулася у каплиці Церкви Скорботної Божої Матері. Протопресвітер греко-католицької парафії Риги отець Валерій Свілстс зазначив, що вперше напередодні Різдва його парафіяни матимуть і передадуть іншим латвійцям Віфлеємський вогонь миру.

«Цей вогонь принесли юні люди з України, бажаючи нам добра, єднання, любові та радості», – наголосив отець Валерій Свілстс.

Принесли додому свічки, запалені від Віфлеємського вогню місцеві українці та посол України в Латвії Анатолій Олійник. Український дипломат висловив переконання, що Віфлеємський вогонь принесе мир, спокій і злагоду латвійському українству на весь 2012 рік.

Ініціатива австрійців, українці підтримали традицію розповсюдження різдвяного символу миру започаткувала у 1986 році австрійська радіокомпанія ORF. Нинішню назву «Віфлеємський вогонь миру» акція отримала після приєднання до неї австрійських скаутів. Українські скаути з «Пласту» також підтримали акцію.

Щороку, напередодні Різдва вогонь із Віфлеєму до Європи доставляють літаком у спеціальному конвеєрі австрійські скаути. Зі столиці Австрії – Відня – вогонь миру передають із рук в руки, від одного скаутського осередку до іншого. Подолавши безліч кордонів, Віфлеємський вогонь потрапляє до тих, хто чекає на світло добра й злагоди.

Іванка Гаврилко, керівник осередку українських пластунів, які привезли Віфлеємський вогонь до Латвії, вважає, що ця акція згуртовує українську молодь усього світу.

Адже пластуни передають Віфлеємський вогонь миру не лише українцям Балтії, але й до Німеччини, Білорусі, Польщі, Болгарії, Румунії, Словаччини, Сербії, а також до Великої Британії, Канади та США.

«Ця акція для мене – ніби запалення вогню у своєму серці, яке зберігається упродовж усього року. Це єднання з усім християнським світом», – каже Іванка Гаврилко.

У Латвії акція «Віфлеємський вогонь миру» відбувається вже третій рік поспіль завдяки дружнім стосункам між «Пластом» та Українським центром молоді та дітей Латвії.

«Мені дуже приємно бачити у церкві багато молодих людей. Коли молилися усі разом, це таке духовне піднесення, аж дух переймає, – каже керівник Центру Ольга Берга. – Я рада, що з кожним роком у цій акції бере участь усе більше латвійців».

Член «Пласту» з 1997 року Сашко Свистун наголосив на благодійному аспекті акції. Адже головна її мета – у світлі Різдвяні свята не забути тих, хто не має домівки, сиріт та знедолених.

За словами пластуна, промінчик Віфлеємського вогню з'єднує з усіма, хто є далеко, поєднує з Христом. Вогонь миру понесуть у дитячі притулки, лікарні та церкви, щоб кожен міг запалити його й поставити вдома на різдвяний стіл.

Edmonton Mill Creek MLA Gene Zwozdesky with members of the Ukrainian Male Chorus of Edmonton, who performed during the Open House.

Zwozdesky elected alternate Speaker

(UkrNews)—Edmonton Mill Creek MLA Gene Zwozdesky chose his annual "Christmas Open House and Festive Season Celebration", held Dec. 15 at the Maharaja Banquet Hall to publicly announce his election as Deputy Chair of Legislature Committees (and second alternate Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta).

Zwozdesky was elected on November 21st on the first ballot by a majority of MLA's who supported his nomination.

During the Fall Session, Zwozdesky chaired the Assembly during Second Readings, Third Readings, and Committee-of-the-Whole (a stage between 2nd and 3rd readings), for a total of 21 hours.

Zwozdesky's is the third such position in the Assembly.

The first is that of Speaker Ken Kowalski (MLA, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock), the second is that of Chair of Legislature Committees (and second alternate Speaker) Wayne Cao (MLA, Calgary-Fort).

Speaker Kowalski is retiring after the next election scheduled for spring, 2012.

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EU envoy attempted to save summit

(Ukrainian Journal)—A European Union envoy, on a mission to Ukraine to save the Dec. 19 summit from failure, said on Dec. 13 he had voiced serious concern again to President Viktor Yanukovych over the jailing of opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko, Reuters reported.

EU commissioner Stefan Fuele, the bloc's point man on Ukraine, held more than three hours of talks with Yanukovych in Kyiv on Dec. 13 and then visited Tymoshenko for a half-hour at the Kyiv prison where she is being held.

"I underlined that the EU is concerned about lack of progress on a number of critical reforms in Ukraine, including those in the constitutional and judicial spheres and we have had substantial discussions on these," Fuele said of his talks with Yanukovych and others.

"I also reiterated our serious concern over recent cases of selective justice in Ukraine, including the cases of Yulia Tymoshenko and others," Fuele said in a statement.

With Tymoshenko, he had discussed her health and developments in her case.

"I informed her about the EUs concerns regarding this process and assured her that we would continue to follow closely her appeal and would insist upon the need for her to benefit from of all her rights to defend herself in a fair process," Fuele said.

The envoy gave no indication that there had been any change of heart by Yanukovych or any sign he would intervene to bring about Tymoshenko's release — indeed the authorities have been piling up charges against her rather than the reverse.

Tymoshenko, a former prime minister, was jailed for seven years in October on charges of abuse of office after a trial the EU says was politically motivated.

Dec. 9, authorities convened a special court in her prison cell and formally "re-arrested" her on a new criminal charge of tax evasion, prompting her lawyer to say that the authorities clearly intended to keep her locked up indefinitely.

The abuse of office charge, for which she was sentenced in October, relates to brokering a gas deal with Russia in 2009 when she was prime minister.

Христос Раждається! Славім Його!

Gene Zwozdesky
Co-Chair, Advisory Council
on Alberta-Ukraine Relations

MLA, Edmonton Mill Creek
8207 Argyll Road
Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 4B2
Phone: 780-466-3737
E-mail: Edmonton.millcreek@assembly.ab.ca

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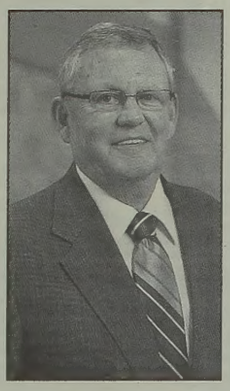

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Україна і Чехія намагаються перегорнути «шпигунський» скандал

Мар'яна Драч, *Радіо Свобода*

У день київського саміту Україна-ЄС до Праги приїхав український прем'єр Ніколай Азаров. Головний акцент його візиту економічний, хоча підписані угоди передовсім стосуються гуманітарної сфери. Після того, як у травні Україна видворила чеських військових аташе за підозрою у шпигунстві, українська влада тепер дала згоду на відновлення чеської військової місії в Києві.

Українська делегація приїхала до Чехії у сумний момент, коли країна згадує колишнього президента Вацлава Гавела, який помер 18 грудня. Перша заява прем'єра Азарова на пресконференції – слова співчуття чеському народові. Так само хвилиною мовчання згадали Гавела на спільному форумі чеських та українських підприємців.

Під час візиту керівника українського уряду до Чехії, 19 грудня були підписані три угоди: про співпрацю в галузі освіти, науки та технологій і культури. Освітній договір, зокрема, розрахований на 2012-2015 роки і має сприяти взаємному обміну викладачами й студентами, прямому співробітництво між університетами.

Прем'єр Чехії Петр Нечас на прес-конференції в Празі назвав Україну важливим партнером Чехії серед країн Східного партнерства Європейського Союзу. «Підтримуємо активну реформаторську політику цих держав», – зазначив Нечас.

Чеський прем'єр також заявив про великі торговельно-економічні перспективи. «Великий потенціал бачимо в галузі енергетики, машинобудування, хімічної промисловості, металургії, інфраструктури, транспортного машинобудування, а також у галузі екологічних технологій та відновлювальних джерел енергії», – заявив Нечас.

Азаров сподівається, що товарообіг з Чехією до кінця року перевищить два мільярди доларів.

Коментуючи газові переговори з Росією, український урядовець висловив сподівання, що угода з'явиться найближчим часом. «Я думаю, що найближчими днями є надія, що ми виробимо компромісне рішення. Для нас це особливо важливо, тому що розпочинається новий рік. Ми хотіли б увійти у новий рік із модернізованою угодою та з нормальними цінами, які не підривають нашої економіки», – сказав Азаров.

Тиждень раніше він запевняв, що Україна витримає ціну в 416 доларів за тисячу кубометрів: «... ми все одно з гарним настроєм зустрінемо Новий Рік».

У Празі тим часом урядовці вже звітували про подолання розбіжностей. Як сказав Петр Нечас, Чеська республіка та Україна подолали проблемний період у двосторонніх відносинах. За словами чеського урядовця, візит Азарова і великої української делегації до Праги свідчить про те, що ці відносини здобули «новий імпульс».

У січні цього року Чехія надала політичний притулок колишньому міністрові економіки України Богдану Данилишину, а в травні Україна вислала чеських військових дипломатів за підозрою у шпигунстві. Офіційна Прага прямо пов'язала це рішення зі справою Данилишина.

На прес-конференції в Празі Азаров назвав ці події «тимчасовими епізодами» і заявив про те, що Україна високо цінує стратегічні відносини з Чехією. Відповідаючи на запитання Радіо Свобода в кулуарах чесько-українського форуму підприємців, Азаров повідомив, чеський військовий аташе приїде до Києва в січні.

У складі української делегації в Празі були міністр освіти і науки Дмітрій Табачник, міністр культури Михайло Кулиняк та голова Державного агентства з питань науки, інновацій та інформатизації Володимир Семиноженко.

Урядовці провели пресконференцію в приміщенні Кабінету міністрів Чехії чеською і російською мовами. Такими ж були робочі мови форуму підприємців з обох держав, який пройшов у приміщенні Міністерства промисловості та торгівлі Чеської республіки.

Це був перший візит українського прем'єра до Чехії за останні п'ять років.

Поки тривали чесько-українські урядові переговори, поруч з будівлею чеського Кабінету міністрів на акцію протесту зібралося близько десяти представників з кількох українських громадських організацій в Празі. Вони тримали плакати з гаслами: «Свободу Юлії Тимошенко і політичним в'язням», «Україні – європейську перспективу, а не ярмо СНД», «Владо Чеської республіки, співпрацюйте з Україною, а не з бандою Януковича-Азарова».

«Ми прийшли із закликами, щоб повернути справжню українську владу, якої сьогодні в Україні бракує», – сказав Радіо Свобода один з організаторів протесту, головний редактор *«Української газети» в Празі* Анатолій Крат.

Він пояснює нечисленність акції з тим, що понеділок 19 грудня – це робочий день, коли більшість українців у Чехії працює. Серед учасників протесту були і представники громадської організації «Українська європейська перспектива», яку очолює Богдан Данилишин, але його самого на акції не було.

За чеськими офіційними даними, нині українці – найбільша група іноземних громадян у Чеській республіці, яка нараховує 117 тисяч осіб.

Бажаю всім радісне та мирне Різдво заповнене благословенням.
Христос Раждається!

Janice Sarich, MLA
EDMONTON-DECORE
Parliamentary Assistant
to Minister of Education

P: 780.414.1328
F: 780.414.1330
E: edmonton.decore@assembly.ab.ca

За пошкодження пам'ятника Сталіну «тризубівці» отримали умовні терміни

(Радіо Свобода)—Жовтневий районний суд Запоріжжя виніс вирок «тризубівцям», які відпиляли голову пам'ятнику Сталіну. Усі обвинувачені отримали умовні терміни покарання. Про це Радіо Свобода повідомив адвокат одного із засуджених Володимир Прудовський, 12 гриня.

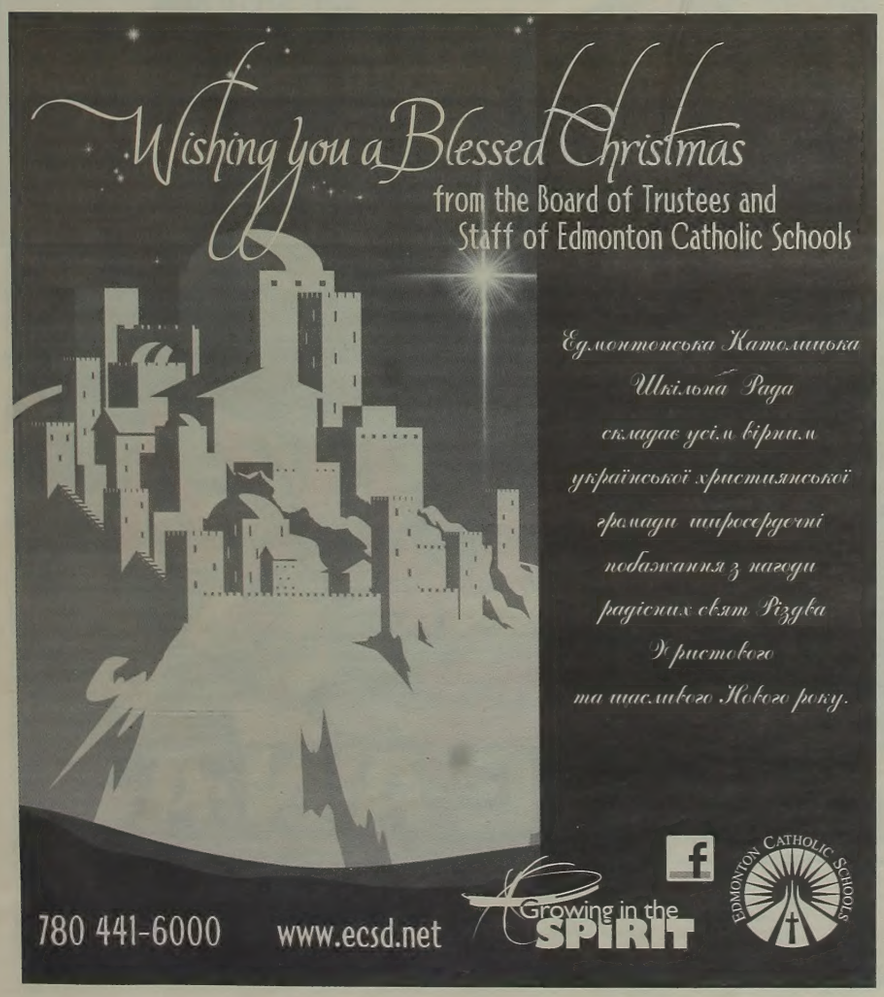
За інформацією Прудовського, зокрема, Роман Хмара, який проходив у справі як організатор, та ще двоє «тризубівців» отримали по три роки позбавлення волі з випробувальним терміном у три роки, решта – від 2 до 3 років обмеження волі з випробувальними термінами у 1-2 роки.

Разом із цим суд зобов'язав «тризубівців» відшкодувати вартість пам'ятника – понад 100 тисяч гривень.

За словами адвоката, суд не взяв до уваги того факту, що сам пам'ятник Сталіну в Запоріжжі був встановлений всупереч українському законодавству.

«Саме встановлення пам'ятника – це по суті заперечення факту Голодомору. Але суд від цього питання ухилився і ніякої оцінки не давав», – сказав Радіо Свобода Володимир Прудовський.

Адвокат також наголосив, що у ході слідства до «тризубівців» застосовувались методи фізичного і психологічного тиску, крім того, у підсудних правоохоронці вилучили і досі не повернули деякі цінні особисті речі.



Judge orders indefinite arrest

Tymoshenko trial resumes in jail cell

(RFE/RL)—Authorities in Ukraine have placed former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko under indefinite arrest following the resumption in her jail cell of an embezzlement trial launched after her conviction on unrelated charges.

The move appeared aimed at heading off any chance of freedom for the 51-year-old former energy executive and heroine of Ukraine's 2004 Orange Revolution if her current appeal of a seven-year sentence for abuse of office is overturned.

The arrest order by Kyiv's Shevchenkivsky Court is part of a probe into the activities of United Energy Systems of Ukraine when she was, according to Ukrainian state security service director Ivan Derevyanko, "president and de facto owner" of the utility in the 1990s.

Tymoshenko and supporters and activists have been joined by Western governments in condemning the proceedings as politically motivated.

Tymoshenko lost a presidential runoff in early 2010 to the pro-Moscow Viktor Yanukovych, whose flawed election win was the target of outrage that sparked the Orange Revolution.

The court resumed the ailing Tymoshenko's latest trial on December 8 in her jail cell in what her lawyer and activists say is a violation of the law and her rights, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reports.

Tymoshenko, who was prime minister in 2005 and from 2007-10, was arrested in August and sentenced in October to seven years in prison for abuse of office in the signing of a gas deal with Russia during her premiership.

Her lawyer, Serhiy Vlasenko, told RFE/RL that Judge Andriy Trubnikov had resumed hearings regarding the United Energy Systems case.

"Nothing to say about the fact that the charges are groundless, the hearings held in the cell [in Kyiv] do not correspond to any existing laws in Ukraine," Vlasenko said.

"It was a real farce. Tymoshenko is sick and lies in her bed. The prosecutor and investigator are sitting in the armchairs brought to the cell early in the morning today. They brought the desk in the cell at 7 a.m. They woke Tymoshenko up at 6 a.m. The judge spent a lot of time considering granting permission for me to bring all the documents related to the case to the detention centre... [something] the prosecutor has been trying to prevent."

Kyiv-based human rights activist Yevhen Zakharov told RFE/RL "that this sort of hearing was not held even during [Soviet dictator Josef] Stalin's era."

"They just ignore laws, her state of health, and common sense," Zakharov said. "[Ukraine's] Administrative Code does not allow the holding of court hearings in a detention center. This is a violation [of her rights]."

Meanwhile, dozens of Tymoshenko's supporters gathered near the Lukyaniv detention center where Tymoshenko is being held chanting "Freedom for Yulia!"

Ukrainian parliament members and journalists were not allowed to be present during the cell hearings.

Many European and U.S. officials have called for her case to be resolved and that she be released from jail.

The head of the EU delegation to Ukraine, Jose Manuel Pinto Teixeira, said that the offsite court sessions violated the European Convention on Human Rights.

Tymoshenko has been ill and very weak for the last several weeks while in detention, and former Ukrainian Health Minister Mykola Polishchuk told RFE/RL on Dec. 1 that Tymoshenko most likely needed to undergo surgery.

Tymoshenko's lawyers say she is suffering from severe back pain, has bruises of unknown origin, recently experienced numbness in her left hand, and has nosebleeds.

On Nov. 29, the State Penitentiary Service announced that Tymoshenko had been transferred to the detention center's medical unit and was being provided with full medical care.

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Court denies Tymoshenko appeal

(RFE/RL)—A Ukrainian court has reportedly denied an appeal by ex-prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko to block new criminal charges against her, opening the way for a trial in which she would have to defend herself against charges of embezzlement and tax evasion.

Judges in a Kyiv appeals court read the decision on Dec. 21 after clearing the courtroom of reporters.

Tymoshenko, who was one of the leaders of Ukraine's 2004 pro-democracy Orange Revolution, was sentenced to seven years in prison in October on abuse of power charges.

She has appealed that ruling.

This latest judgment concerned new charges of tax evasion and embezzlement.

Prosecutors have claimed she committed the crimes while heading a natural gas import company in the 1990s, concealing some $165 million in corporate revenues and failing to pay $6 million in taxes.

Dec. 13, demonstrators supporting Tymoshenko battled police outside the court'

Hundreds of Tymoshenko supporters attempted to break through a police cordon preventing access to the Kyiv appeals courtroom.

Reports say the clashes blocked some traffic on Kyiv's main street.

Tymoshenko was not attending the court session. Her lawyers were planning to argue that the Oct. 11 sentence on abuse-of-power charges should be dropped.

They were also expected to argue that the former prime minister should be released from prison because of poor health. Tymoshenko is reportedly no longer able to walk as a result of her incarceration.

And on Dec. 9 opposition deputies walked out of a Ukrainian parliament session "to protest what they called President Viktor Yanukoyvch's "lawlessness," RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reports.

The deputies of the Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko — Fatherland (BYuT-Batkivshchyna) faction and Our Ukraine-People's Self Defence (NUNS) said that "the organizers of the current repression should be held accountable for their deeds, and developed countries should introduce personal sanctions against them."

Wishing everyone best wishes and a prosperous New Year.

Janice Sarich, MLA
EDMONTON-DECORE
Parliamentary Assistant to Minister of Education

P: 780.414.1328
F: 780.414.1330
E: edmonton.decore@assembly.ab.ca

BYT nominating Tymoshenko for Nobel Peace Prize

(Interfax-Ukraine)—The BYT-Batkivschyna faction is nominating former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko for the Nobel Peace Prize, the head of the Verkhovna Rada committee on industrial and regulatory policy and entrepreneurship, MP Natalia Korolevska, has said, her press service reported on Dec. 15.

Korolevska stressed the importance that "the whole world adopts a position regarding the mockery of an innocent person."

"Yulia Tymoshenko is a symbol of democracy in Ukraine. And I think that the Nobel Committee and the European countries will help change the current situation. It's very important that the whole world outlines the No.1 task for the Ukrainian authorities - the release of a wrongly convicted person, over which, in addition, they are now continuing to mock," the press service quoted Korolevska as saying.

"The merit of Yulia Tymoshenko is in the active political position that she adopted. She passed through the Maidan, launched democratic processes in the country, and was imprisoned as the opposition leader. All this makes her worthy of the Nobel Peace Prize," Korolevska said.

She added that the necessary documents had been prepared and sent to the Nobel Committee.

"We conducted the necessary negotiations and sent applications to the committee. The procedure for awarding this prize is very complex, but we are ready to undergo it," she said.

Ukrainian Canadian
ARCHIVES & MUSEUM OF ALBERTA

Христос Рождається

At this special time of year the Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta thanks you for your ongoing support and wishes you a Merry Christmas. May God bless you and yours with health and happiness throughout 2012!

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UN Office: 780-488-3693; Advertising: 780-488-3860
Fax: 780-488-3859; E-mail: ukrnews@shaw.ca

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Canada

EU sets an example

The European Union has given Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych a very strong signal that his political repressions and erosion of democracy must come to an end

During the 15th European Union-Ukraine Summit, held Dec. 19 in Kyiv, The European Union announced that while the negotiations for an association agreement between the 27-member bloc and Ukraine have been completed, the signing of the document will depend on political developments in Kyiv.

In his statement directly addressing Ukraine`s President Viktor Yanukovych, European Council President Herman Van Rompuy made it very clear in no uncertain terms that what was holding up the agreement was the continued repression of political opponents, citing in particular the jailing of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

"Our strong concern is primarily related to the risks of politically-motivated justice in Ukraine. The Tymoshenko trial is the most striking example. But just as important, a comprehensive justice reform in line with international standards is absolutely key. Media freedom and freedom of assembly are also key for a full fledged democracy. Shortcomings have to be corrected," he said.

"Mr President, the respect for these principles, enshrined in the Eastern Partnership and at the core of the Association Agreement, is decisive for the pace and depth of rapprochement with the EU and of the signing and ratification of the Association Agreement. But it is also fundamental to Ukraine's future development as a competitive, dynamic and innovative society.

"In this context, the parliamentary elections to be held next year, will be a litmus test. The conduct of these elections will have to meet the commitments of the OSCE, including the ensuring of a level playing field for all possible candidates. And it is of outmost importance that they can exercise their political rights," Van Rompuy added.

Considering the process leading up to the negotiated agreement lasted four years, this is a stunning blow to Yanukovych. The EU`s position also stands as an example for other countries – Canada in particular – to follow.

Our government has also been involved in free trade negotiations with Ukraine and has been urged to use these negotiations as a lever for the protection of human rights by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and a number of former Ambassadors to Ukraine. However, statements made by Conservative Members of Parliament during a special debate on Ukraine, Oct. 18, indicate the government may be reluctant to do so. The EU`s decision, however, puts the onus on them to move in the same direction and our community leaders must use this to bolster their arguments.

Some say that by refusing to sign the association agreement, the EU is pushing Ukraine closer to Russia. But the Yanukovych regime has been doing so from the moment it seized power. It has repeatedly demonstrated its disdain for the Ukrainian language, culture, and historical tragedies and its willingness to sacrifice the country`s sovereignty in order to appease Russia.

Neither does the Yanukovych regime have any respect for European values. It has stubbornly refused to release Tymoshenko or other political prisoners and ease up on his repressive measures. Instead it has increased the heat, laying even more charges against Tymoshenko and ordering the unprecedented step of interrogating her on her sickbed in the prison cell.

But what the Yanukovych regime does want is the economic benefits that will come with a closer association with the EU. This would most benefit the eastern oligarchs who prop up the regime.

But with the EU's decision, it should become very clear to them that it is Yanukovych`s extreme vindictiveness and gross irresponsibility in continuing with his personal vendettas that is leading the country to ruin and threatening their own economic fortunes.

Only his resignation or ouster can stop Ukraine`s further slide into the abyss.

Ukraine's justice standards plummet

By Taras Kuzio

(RFE/RL)—Corruption and corporate raiding are growing at an alarming rate in Ukraine since Viktor Yanukovych came to power. The country dropped 18 places this year in Transparency International's annual rankings, now standing below Russia and Azerbaijan (both 143) and in 152nd place alongside Congo, the Central African Republic and Tajikistan. Moreover, 152nd place corresponds to 2.3 on the 10 point scale in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index.

Transparency International's Ukraine office warned: "In 2011, Ukraine is on the way to a corruption abyss." They found President Viktor Yanukovych had not undertaken any noticeable fight against corruption, which remained virtual.

By contrast, Georgia has made tremendous strides in rooting out corruption — especially in the police and judicial system. In 2011, Transparency International ranked Georgia 64th (compared to Ukraine's 152nd) showing how political will in combating corruption in Georgia since the 2003 Rose Revolution has improved the situation. Ukraine, following the 2004 Orange Revolution, failed to replace the Soviet justice system or combat corruption except in 2005, by the first Tymoshenko government. Georgia (64th) is ranked better than old EU members Italy (69) and Greece (80) and new EU members Romania (75) and Bulgaria (86) and sits alongside Slovakia (66) and Hungary (54).

Ukraine dropped to 152nd place (out of 183) in the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and World Bank's 2011 Ease of Doing Business index, because of growing corruption and corporate raiding. The proportion of businessmen who use unofficial methods to deal with the authorities has grown from 35 percent to 46 percent and their expenditure on corruption had increased from 6 percent to 10 percent of their budgets.

The nature of corporate raiding is changing. In the past, businessmen used corrupt judges to change ownership deeds, but increasingly law enforcement structures are illegally taking over businesses. The Yanukovych administration argues that Yulia Tymoshenko's sentence, and the arrest of Yuriy Lutsenko and other "Orange" leaders and officials is part of an anti-corruption drive that has arrested hundreds of officials. The list of arrested officials has never been revealed and it has not halted the growth of corruption.

Justice is applied selectively and in relation to the level of one's political obedience. While Tymoshenko is in jail for allegedly bringing losses of $190 million to the state, Kyiv Mayor Leonid Chernovetsky and his associates remain free. Yet, the extent of their corruption is beyond doubt in the biggest land grab since Ukraine became an independent state. Kyiv's city governor (presidential representative) Oleksandr Popov reported that they had returned 1,700 hectares of land illegally distributed by the Mayor's office. Asked if Chernovetsky and his subordinates would be punished for mass corruption, Popov said this was a question to be addressed to the prosecutor's office. When asked if the prosecutor's office had opened cases against Chernovetsky First Deputy Prosecutor Renat Kuzmin replied "Never".

Asked if there were criminal cases outstanding against the former President Viktor Yushchenko, Kuzmin replied that there never had been. Yushchenko defended Chernovetsky in the 2008 pre-term mayoral elections against Tymoshenko's attempts to unseat him. Yushchenko supported the 2006 gas contract, even though it is little different to the 2009 gas contract for which Tymoshenko has been sentenced. He also supports her prison sentence.

Ukraine continues to include Soviet era articles in its 2001 criminal code, one of which was used to imprison Tymoshenko. As EU leaders have stated, these articles are not included in any European country's criminal codes.

In 2008, Georgia purged its Soviet-era Criminal Code with a new Criminal Proceedings Code that is fully adversarial, has clear standards of evidence, preference for non-custodial sentences in pre-trial situations and introduced trial by jury. The rationale for jury trials was put by Levan Ramishvili, the Director of the Liberty Institute, "It is harder to pressure 12 people than it is to pressure one judge". Ukraine has no framework for jury trials and operates under the Soviet system, where the prosecutor is all powerful and the judge is an arbiter. Ukraine's prosecutor's office remains a Soviet institution that has been turned by the Yanukovych administration into an arm of state political repression.

The aim is to punish — not administer justice. This was seen in the Tymoshenko trial through the use of a small court room in summer and an inexperienced judge, an over-crowded jail and the denial of medical care. Yanukovych's understanding of "justice" is selective and characterized by observers as "thuggish machismo".

Yanukovych's attitudes to the rule of law could be seen when he offered to Chancellor Angela Merkel that he would release Tymoshenko if she paid a $190 million fine. Merkel reportedly replied "This is not a bazaar." He joked to the Russian Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin that he would release her on her birthday and Party of Regions deputies offered on television to exchange Tymoshenko for former Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko, who was imprisoned in 2006 by a Californian court.

Viktoriya Sumar explains the reasons for the demonstrative brutality: "Yes, they [the authorities] are afraid. But, by carefully hiding their own fear they are trying to impose fear on us. Who wants to be in opposition? Who wants to become a viable alternative? If you do, the same could happen to you...Hence the irrational and demonstrative cruelty. Human dignity does not enter into their calculations". In Georgia, sweeping public sector reforms led to the entire justice system becoming transformed. From 2003-2010 prosecutions took place of 1,064 policemen, 109 investigators, 20 prosecutors and 30 judges. During the same period Georgia's prison population swelled from 6,274 to 23,789 as the administration's anti-corruption drive bore fruit.

Many long-serving judges were sacked in Georgia and a new generation of young judges was appointed who had received Western education. The salaries of public officials, including policemen, prosecutors and judges were hiked, reducing incentives to take bribes. A zero-tolerance policy towards corruption was adopted and new standards introduced, including a written examination for judges. As in George Orwell's novel Animal Farm, in Yanukovych's Ukraine everybody is equal, but some are more equal than others.

New election law to prompt consolidation of opposition

By Pavel Korduban

(Jamestown Foundation)—On Dec. 8, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych signed the law on parliamentary elections, which parliament passed on Nov. 17. The new law should allow the ruling Party of Regions to win the election scheduled for October 2012, despite its declining popularity. The elections law raises the threshold parties must cross to win seats, thereby eliminating many rivals, and re-introduces a mixed system under which it should be easier for government-backed candidates to win. The new rules should prompt the consolidation of the fragmented opposition. The two largest opposition parties, Fatherland and the Front of Change (FZ), have started talks to agree on joint candidates for single-mandate districts.

Under the new rules, the 100 percent proportional system, where parliament was elected from party lists is replaced with a mixed system, where 50 percent of people's deputies will be elected from party lists according to the same proportional system, and the other 50 percent from first-past-the-post constituencies. This is a boon for the ruling party. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, when a similar system existed in Ukraine, pro-government candidates usually defeated their rivals in the first-past-the-post constituencies, because they were supported by local mayors, council members and rich businessmen, who were, as a rule, linked to the ruling elite.

The threshold for parties is raised from three percent to five percent and blocs of parties are not allowed to participate in elections. This complicates the task for small parties, both opposition and pro-government. Several of them are likely to disappear. One example is the relatively new liberal party, Strong Ukraine, whose leader, Deputy Prime Minister Serhiy Tihipko, decided to merge the party with the Regions. Parliamentary Speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn has also indicated on several occasions that his Popular Party could merge with the Regions. Lytvyn's party has been a junior partner in the pro-government coalition with the Regions and the communists.

The new law was supported by the absolute majority of 366 people's deputies in the 450-seat legislature, including many oppositionists who participated in drafting the bill. These included members of Fatherland and FZ, who explained their cooperation with the

Cont. on P. 7

Yanukovych endorsed book glorifying Stalin-era secret police

By Yuriy Onyshkiv, *Kyiv Post*

While President Viktor Yanukovych joined his three predecessors last month in commemorating the millions of innocent victims of Soviet atrocities, he expressed admiration for Josef Stalin-era repression only nine years ago.

As governor of Donetsk Oblast in 2002, Yanukovych endorsed a book that praises Soviet secret police and their tactics. "Donbas Chekists [members of the Soviet secret police] under any conditions have done and do their high duty with honour," he wrote.

Yanukovych's published foreword is included in a book entitled "State Security Agencies in the Donetsk Region."

The book is written by two former KGB officers. In a two-page signed essay, Yanukovych wrote that the Soviet KGB and its predecessor services – Stalin's NKVD and the earlier Cheka – have "firmly stood on guard over the interests of our people and the state." Yanukovych praised them for launching "a struggle against political extremism, sabotage and criminal activities."

Responding to the Kyiv Post's inquiry, Yanukovych's press service wrote that the president "does not approve of crimes of the KGB and their predecessors in Soviet times," but did not clarify why he endorsed the book.

The book in question is apologetic about the KGB, praising its successes and that of its predecessor agency in carrying out the state policy of collectivized agriculture, a key step in Stalin's forced famine that killed millions of Ukrainians in 1932-33. Yanukovych last month paid homage to victims of the Holodomor, or death by starvation.

The cruel measures were part of Stalin's drive to rapidly industrialize the Soviet Union.

Besides separating agrarian Ukrainians from their private land plots, historians believe the record shows that Stalin also wanted to kill Ukrainian nationalistic sentiment along with the millions of innocent people who perished.

Estimates of Holodomor victims range from two to seven million people.

The cover of the book "State Security Agencies in the Donetsk Region."

The authors also praise the attempts by the NKVD and KGB to fight the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists-Ukrainian Insurgent Army, or OUN-UPA, whose forces fought for Ukrainian independence from the USSR.

In the 1960s, during the less-repressive Soviet eras of Stalin successors Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev, the KGB created a department in charge of punishing intellectuals who criticized totalitarian rule. The authors justified the KGB initiative by blaming dissidents for sabotaging the country.

Volodymyr Vyatrovych, a historian who under President Viktor Yushchenko was in charge of declassifying some of the KGB archives in Ukraine, says that if a similar book praising the crimes of East Germany's Stasi or the Nazi-era Gestapo police was published with a politician's endorsement, it would have created a huge scandal.

But such a situation is unlikely in Ukraine. Vyatrovych said that many Ukrainians are no longer deeply aware of Soviet atrocities. Moreover, the Soviet communist elite became part of the political elite in independent Ukraine.

As a result, there has been no lustration. Ex-President Viktor Yushchenko made a concerted effort to highlight Soviet crimes during his presidency, but his unpopularity undermined his message.

Yanukovych's views on the Soviet Union, and its murderous record, have long been a subject of controversy and shifting positions.

In 2003, then Prime Minister Yanukovych supported then President Leonid Kuchma's position that the Holodomor famine was genocide against Ukrainians.

But seven years later, he altered his position. During his visit to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in April 2010, Yanukovych denied that the Holodomor was genocide.

Those views run counter to Ukrainian law that recognizes the 20th-century tragedy as an attempt to wipe out Ukraine as a nation.

"Recognizing Holodomor as genocide of a people is wrong and unfair. It was a common tragedy of people, republics within the Soviet Union," Yanukovych said at the time.

Stanislav Kulchytsky, a renowned Ukrainian historian, suspects that Yanukovych softened his stance under pressure from Russian leaders, who have denied that the tragedy was man-made and aimed at Ukrainians.

However, after devoting little attention to these issues, Yanukovych as president is steadily taking up the mantle of his predecessors in recognizing the nation's tragic past.

Unlike his 2002 preface, Yanukovych on the Nov. 26 Holodomor Remembrance Day called the years of Soviet rule "terrible years of totalitarianism," reminding the nation that "almost every Ukrainian family suffered" then.

Vyatrovych says that Yanukovych appears not to be well-versed in history, which may explain his flip-flops and evolution. "He adjusts his vision of Ukraine's history to a particular political context," added Vyatrovych.

Kulchytsky also believes that the shift towards greater sensitivity and awareness is a political move to appeal to voters. "All politicians are dependent on their electorate," Kulchytsky said.

New election law to prompt consolidation of opposition

Cont. from P. 6

authorities by contributing provisions aimed to prevent vote rigging. They said that had they not backed the bill, the Regions using their numerical strength would have pushed through parliament an even worse bill. Apart from introducing the same mixed system and raising the election barrier, a bill written solely by the Party of the Regions would have also provided the government with incentives to falsify election results by making it possible to vote at home without medical certificates and eliminating opposition candidates on formal grounds such as typos in income declarations.

The pro-opposition website Ukrainska Pravda said the consensus in parliament on the new election law was "a coup of big parties against small parties." The new rules may lead to a three-party system consisting of the Regions, Fatherland and FZ, the website predicted. Unsurprisingly, UDAR (Punch), a new party headed by the boxing champion Vitaly Klitschko, which opinion polls show is the third most popular opposition party but may not clear the 5 percent barrier, called the new law "a conspiracy," and said that a party whose leader was imprisoned by the authorities should not have sided with the government on election rules. This was aimed at Fatherland, whose leader Yulia Tymoshenko, was sentenced to seven years in jail in October for exceeding her authority in preparing a gas deal with Russia in 2009. It is widely believed that she was punished for her opposition to Yanukovych.

FZ leader, Arseny Yatsenyuk, has claimed that the new law was "a victory for the opposition," since it "will eliminate election fraud." He announced that his party would start talks to form a joint list for single-mandate districts with Fatherland, adding that a higher election barrier gave the opposition a chance to unite. He urged other opposition parties to join, saying that those not siding with the Fatherland-FZ alliance would support the government. This was a change of stance as last summer Yatsenyuk insisted said it was unnecessary for opposition parties to unite ahead of the election. Fatherland and FZ expect several smaller opposition parties to join, including the far-right Freedom, according to Fatherland deputy chairman Oleksandr Turchynov. He said in an interview with LIGABiznesInform that it was a realistic goal to put forward joint candidates from the opposition in every single-mandate district.

Meanwhile, a fresh opinion poll by the Kyiv-based pollster KMIIS, has shown that trust in the mainstream parties is falling, so the well-established parties changed the rules just in time to discourage possible new challengers. The Regions is still in the lead, but support for it fell from 13.5 percent in June to 12.5 percent in November, according to the poll. The rating of Fatherland fell from 10.9 percent in June to 10.2 percent, and FZ's rating fell from 7.7 to 7.0 percent. Yet, support for the communists rose from 4.0 to 5.1 percent, and for UDAR from 3.1 to 4.4 percent. The share of those who would vote against all, were undecided or would abstain, totalled 50 percent, rising marginally compared to June.

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«Зустрінемось біля пам'ятника Івасюкові у Львові»

Галина Терещук, *Радіо Свобода*

Тепер у центрі Львова можна призначати зустріч біля пам'ятника Володимирові Івасюку. Ініціатором і благодійником встановлення скульптури відомому композиторові і співакові, авторові незабутньої «Червоної рути», «Мальви», «Водограй» та інших пісень став музикант Святослав Вакарчук. Відкриття пам'ятника відбулось скромно, без зайвої помпезності, 20 грудня.

Івасюк у бронзі, немов крокує з консерваторії до філармонії з кептарем на плечі. Навколо скульптури викладено мозаїку у вигляді гітари. Цей шматок дороги Івасюк за життя проходив чи не щодня і, можливо, наспівуючи якусь мелодію для майбутньої пісні.

Ідея встановлення пам'ятника відомому митцеві Івасюкові прийшла іншому музикантові, лідерові гурту «Океан Ельзи» Вакарчукові п'ять років тому. Митець пожертвував на виготовлення скульптури 360 тисяч гривень.

Оргкомітет обрав місце під пам'ятник на проспекті Шевченка і затвердив проект скульптора Сергія Олешка. Вакарчуку дуже сподобався пам'ятник композиторові.

«Ми всі любимо обговорювати те, що хтось зробив, любимо критикувати. Я спокійно сприймаю те, що комусь може не сподобатись цей пам'ятник. Але мені він дуже подобається. Місце прекрасне, пам'ятник європейський. Я хотів, щоб він був не монументальний, а щоб він був живий. Моя мрія, щоб сюди приходили молоді люди з гітарою, співали пісні, щоб це місце було осередком молодіжної культури», – каже Святослав Вакарчук.

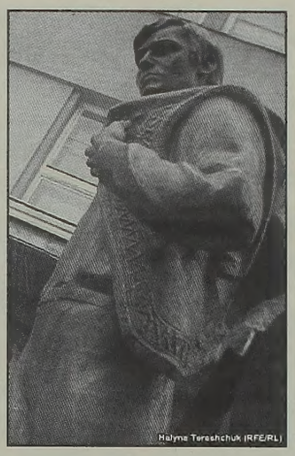

ФОТО - ГАЛИНА ТЕРЕЩУК
Пам'ятник Володимирові Івасюку,

Сестра Володимира Івасюка Галина щаслива, що тепер можна сказати «Зустрінемось біля Івасюка». Скульптура нагадала їй фотографію брата, коли він йде Львовом, а на плечі накинутий піджак.

«Повірте мені дуже боляче, бо Володі було 30 років, коли він загинув і все життя я зіштовхуюсь з пам'ятниками. Він так рано пішов з життя. Для нас благородний вчинок Святослава Вакарчука став несподіванкою. Нехай це буде зразком для інших, що варто пам'ятати гідних людей», – зауважила Галина Івасюк.

Володимир Івасюк, автор понад 100 українських пісень, більше півсотні інструментальних творів, музики до вистав, художник. Він загинув за невстановлених донині обставин між 24-27 квітня 1979 року. Похорон Володимира Івасюка 22 травня перетворився у масовий протест громади. Родина марно намагалась оббивати пороги міліції і прокуратури, щоб з'ясувати, що сталось з сином і братом. Бо не вірила в офіційну версію щодо самогубства.

У 2009 році Генеральна прокуратура, на вимогу громадськості і, зокрема, тодішнього Президента Віктора Ющенка, поновила закриту в минулому кримінальну справу щодо смерті Івасюка. Оскільки було дуже багато фактів, які під час слідства у 1979 році не перевірялися. Зокрема, не відпрацьована версія вбивства під інсценування самогубства, не досліджені тілесні пошкодження, не допитані свідки.

Матеріали у справі Івасюка перебувають у Києві в архіві Міністерства внутрішніх справ, у Московському архіві КДБ, чимало документів знищені. Галина Івасюк немає жодної інформації щодо справи. Лише знає, що вона продовжується, але ніхто з прокуратури родину не інформує про якісь подробиці.

Пісня Івасюка дуже рідко звучать в українському етері. Хочеться, щоб не лише пам'ять зберігалась про композитора, але й щоб і пісні звучали, зауважив Святослав Вакарчук. А це залежить і від потреби людей і їхніх смаків самих людей, які мають популяризувати творчість Володимира Івасюка. А улюбленою піснею Вакарчука є Івасюкова – «Мальви».

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На Дніпропетровщині виявили невідоме поховання жертв Голодомору

Юлія Рацибарська, *Радіо Свобода*

У Дніпродзержинську виявили досі невідоме, перше в місті, поховання жертв Голодомору. Старе кладовище обростає новими могилами – майже половину його вже знищили. Місцева влада не знає, що робити з цвинтарем, і заявляє: ще не доведено, що це поховання – саме 1933 року. Натомість, у Дніпродзержинському історичному музеї фахівці підтверджують: йдеться саме про жертв голоду, вчиненого радянською владою.

Старий цвинтар на околиці Дніпродзержинська давно закрили для поховань. Старожили села Романкового, яке зараз входить до території міста, розповідають: саме тут у 32-33 роках поховали сотні їхніх односельців, загиблих від голоду. За радянських часів цей факт приховували. Нині замість занедбаного поховання стихійно виникає нове: місцеві мешканці кажуть, що на місці старих могил копають нові, викидаючи останки геть. Таким чином уже знищили майже половину кладовища.

На захист старого поховання виступила місцева родина – подружжя Циганків. Людмила та Юрій власним коштом, із невеликих пенсій, огородили місцину парканом і почали переконувати жителів не чинити наругу.

«Старожили розповідали, що тоді поховання велося дуже щільно, економили землю, дуже багато було загиблих. Зараз знайти вільне місце між могилами неможливо. Щоб отримати місце для одного покійника, треба руйнувати кілька могил. Ми благали людей: що ж ви робите, це друге знущання над загиблими від голоду!» – каже Людмила Циганок.

У Дніпродзержинському міськвиконкомі про історичне поховання дізналися від журналістів. І що робити зі цвинтарем, не знають. Начальник Головного архітектурного управління міста Юрій Бєлобородов стверджує: ще не доведено, що це поховання саме 33 року.

«Створена робоча група, вона визначить. Потім це питання винесемо на сесію міськради, і якщо є потреба, увічнити пам'ять, увічнимо. Зараз це все на рівні пліток. Хтось роздуває цю тему, кому це треба», – зазначив у коментарі для Радіо Свобода Бєлобородов.

Натомість, місцеві історики запевняють: те, що це поховання загиблих від Голодомору, відомо достеменно – і зі свідчень старожилів, і з історичних документів. Зараз фахівці готують ґрунтовну історичну довідку про цвинтар, щоб довести це владі. Кладовище мають оголосити меморіальним і його повинна охороняти держава, – наголосила Радіо Свобода директор Дніпродзержинського музею історії міста Наталя Буланова.

Ukraine drops murder case against Kuchma

(RFE/RL)—A district court in Kyiv has dismissed charges against former President Leonid Kuchma alleging his involvement in the 2000 killing of investigative journalist Heorhiy Gongadze.

Prosecutors alleged that Kuchma issued orders to subordinates that eventually led to the journalist being killed.

The Pechersky District Court on Dec. 14 ruled that the main evidence against Kuchma — surreptitious tape recordings made by former presidential bodyguard Mykola Melnychenko — had been obtained by illegal means and therefore could not serve as the basis for a criminal complaint.

The district court's decision, which came in response to an objection by defence lawyers, follows an October 20 ruling by the Constitutional Court ruling on the inadmissibility of such evidence.

The decision can be appealed within seven days.

Defence lawyer Viktor Petrunenko told journalists outside the court that the evidence against Kuchma was insufficient for prosecution.

"We are satisfied with the decision because it is based on the law," Petrunenko said. "We have always been convinced that Leonid Kuchma was not involved in the tragic events connected with Heorhiy Gongadze, so we knew that there were no grounds for the deputy prosecutor-general to begin criminal proceedings."

Valentyna Telychenko, a lawyer representing Gongadze's widow, Myroslava, expressed her disappointment with the court proceedings.

"The court's ruling is against the law, and as a representative of Myroslava Gongadze, I will have to appeal it in court," Telychenko said. "The judge who handed down the ruling made a number of mistakes."

Kuchma served as president of Ukraine from 1994 until 2005.

Gongadze disappeared on Sept., 2000, and a headless body that is believed to be his was found in a forest near Kyiv in November 2000.

The same month, Melnychenko released audio recordings that he claims were made in Kuchma's office. The tapes purportedly contain conversations between Kuchma and senior officials regarding Gongadze, as well as other journalists and parliamentary deputies.

In the Melnychenko tapes, Gongadze's name is mentioned a number of times by a voice purported to be Kuchma's. The president appears to be ordering Gongadze's killing, saying: "Drive him out! Throw him out! Give him to the Chechens!"

Kuchma has admitted that his voice is on the tapes, but claims they were doctored. He has denied any involvement in the case.

In charges filed in March, prosecutors accused Kuchma of "exceeding his authority" and "abuse of office" and declared the Melnychenko tapes material evidence in the case.

In September, former Interior Ministry officer Oleksiy Pukach testified in his own trial on charges of murdering Gongadze that Kuchma, his former chief of staff Volodymyr Lytvyn (currently speaker of parliament), and former Interior Minister Yuriy Kravchenko ordered Gongadze's killing.

Kravchenko was found dead at his summer house in March 2005. Officially, his death was ruled a suicide, but many observers doubt that explanation.

Written by Robert Coalson on the basis of reporting from Kyiv by RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service and agency reports

Gongadze's widow to appeal ruling

(RFE/RL)—The widow of slain Ukrainian journalist Heorhiy Gongadze says she will appeal the court decision to dismiss charges against former President Leonid Kuchma for his alleged involvement in her husband's murder, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reports.

A Kyiv court dropped all charges against Kuchma on Dec. 14. Myroslava Gongadze told RFE/RL the same day that the court ruling "does not lift suspicion that Kuchma was involved in the ordering of the killing."

"The trial has not focused on the case's major points, the court fully ignored all the laws and regulations; with its decision the court hammered the last nail into the lid of Ukrainian justice's coffin," Gongadze said.

Gongadze told RFE/RL from Washington, where she lives with her two daughters, that she will continue fighting for justice for her late husband.

She added that she does not trust Ukraine's courts and will refer the case to a European court.

Femen activists home after Belarus ordeal

(RFE/RL—Three Ukrainian activists who staged a topless protest in the Belarusian capital mocking President Alyaksandr Lykashenka have returned to Kyiv after allegedly being abducted, humiliated, and threatened by Belarusian intelligence officers, RFE/RL's Belarus Service reports.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry says the three — identified as Aleksandra Nemchinova, Oksana Shachko, and Inna Shevchenko — returned to Ukraine earlier in the day in the company of Kyiv's consul to Minsk.

Colleagues from Femen claimed the three were kidnapped from a Minsk bus station after their Dec. 19 protest and driven to a remote forest area where they underwent a terrifying ordeal.

Femen says KGB agents stripped them naked before dousing them with flammable liquid and threatening to set them on fire.

Speaking at a news conference in Kyiv on Dec. 21, Femen activist Inna Shevchenko maintained that her group won't stop because of threats.

"If they think that by this bullying they will break us, in response I can only laugh," she said. "We promise that we will continue coming to Belarus. We promise to support the Belarusian people. We will continue our work, now with greater strength."

The Belarusian KGB has called the protest outside its offices an "especially crude provocation" but denied ever holding the activists.

Ukrainian Femen activists Aleksandra Nemchinova, Inna Shevchenko, and Oksana Shachko (left to right) speak to reporters at a hospital in the Belarusian town of Elsk on Dec. 20.

Locals in Byaki, where they later turned up, told RFE/RL's Belarus Service that the women had been left there and ordered to cross the border into Ukraine there.

Late on Dec. 20, they were later said to be in Belarusian police custody.

Femen leader Anna Hutsol had described them as "alive but not in good health" and "very scared" in comments to RFE/RL's Belarus Service.

Femen sprung up in 2008 as a feminist rights group but has staged provocative stunts to focus media attention on an increasingly diverse range of international issues.

Bare-chested and wearing fake Lukashenka-style moustaches at the Dec. 19 action, the women held placards that read "Freedom to political prisoners" and "Long live Belarus," a mantra of the protest movement.

Already notorious for their suppression of dissent, authorities in Belarus have clamped down further on public expressions of opposition since a flawed presidential election sparked street protests in December 2010.

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Веселих Свят та щасливого Нового Року!
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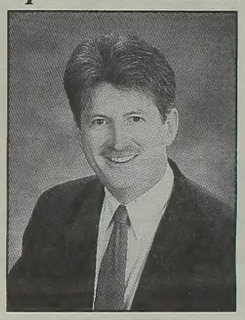

Hugh MacDonald, MLA
Edmonton Gold Bar
Critic for Treasury Board; Finance & Enterprise; Justice and Attorney General; Solicitor General; Public Security
#102, 7024 - 101 Ave, NW, Edmonton, Alberta T6A 0H7
Tel: 780-414-1015 • Fax: 780-414-1017
e-mail: edmonton.goldbar@assembly.ab.ca

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Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney with Mississauga's Barvinok Dance Ensemble at the 2011 Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival.

Best Wishes
for a
Happy Holiday
Season
NORTHLAND POWER

BWVTUF to host official end of 120 anniversary year

(UCC 120 ACC)—Roman Brytan, Chair of the UCC 120th Anniversary Commemorative Committee, has announced that the national anniversary celebrations will be officially brought to a conclusion at the 2012 Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival (TUF), which will take place Sept. 14 through 16.

National commemoration of the 120th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada began with an official logo unveiling and pioneer family gathering, held over the Victoria Day weekend in May, 2011 at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village east of Edmonton. Since then, with the encouragement of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, various celebrations, festivals, concerts and banquets across the country have been dedicated to this community milestone.

"Having launched official festivities at a rural, internationally renowned historical museum in Western Canada, near the original homestead site of the widely-acknowledged first pioneer settlers from Halychyna, it is fitting that we conclude these celebrations in a major hub of subsequent waves of settlement, and the site of the largest urban Ukrainian cultural celebration in Canada," says Brytan. And why a celebration "year" that comprises some 16 calendar months? "Easy," he explains, "although we trace the very beginnings of Ukrainian settlement to 1891, this was not an event that took place in a day, or even a month. And many pioneer firsts occurred in 1892, including the birth of the first Ukrainian child born on Canadian soil and the almost legendary arrival of the Nebyliw villagers, following the lead of Pylypow and Eleniak."

"It is indeed a great privilege and honour to be chosen to host such an important milestone in the life of our Ukrainian community in Canada," says TUF founder and Executive Producer Jurij Klufas. "We are very mindful that the major credit for this 120 year achievement lies with our Ukrainian communities in Western Canada, but we are equally mindful of the fact that this is a celebration of all 120 years of Ukrainian history in this country. Our Festival Committee will do our utmost to make this Closing Celebration worthy of the determination and accomplishments of our early pioneers and all Ukrainian Canadian generations that followed."

Anniversary-specific events at the 2012 Festival have yet to be announced, however, interested parties can get a taste of the magnitude and impact of TUF by visiting the website <www.ukrainianfestival.com>.

For an overview of some 120th anniversary events of the past year, visit the "120th Anniversary" events page at <www.cc.ca>. Visitors to this site can also view a recently-released catalogue of souvenir 120th Anniversary Logo items, available now to order on-line.

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Members of Toronto's Ukraina Scholl of Arts check out one of the 2,000 complimentary issues of Ukrainian News distributed at the 2011 Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival.

PHOTO – YAROSLAV KITYNSKYY

Dnipro performs at Legislature

The Ukrainian Dnipro Ensemble of Edmonton under the direction of its new conductor Irene Szmihelsky performed a number of Christmas carols at the Alberta Legislature, Dec. 19. Their repertoire consisted of tradition Ukrainian carols, "shchedrivky" (Epiphany Eve carols), plus some English numbers including an arrangement of "Mary Did You Know" sung by a mini-choir conducted by Assistant Director Gloria Zaharia.

Hunger strikers end protest after pledge of payments

(RFE/RL)—About 20 veterans of the Chornobyl nuclear disaster cleanup effort have ended their hunger strike in the eastern Ukrainian city of Donetsk, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reports.

At least five Chornobyl veterans were continuing to stage their round-the-clock protest, and one of them vowed to continue his hunger strike.

The veterans decided to stop their protest on Dec. 12 after Donetsk Oblast state administration chief Andriy Shishatskyy promised to pay their pensions for November and December "in full."

One of those protesters, Volodymyr Derkach, told RFE/RL he is shocked by the others' decision to end the hunger strike. He said the official's verbal promise cannot be taken seriously and the protest should continue.

Derkach added that he and several other veterans who do not agree with the decision to end the protest do not know what they should do next.

Some of the 30 or so liquidators of the Chornobyl nuclear disaster during their hunger strike in early December.

Mykola Honcharov, a Chornobyl veteran and organizer of the protest actions, was not reachable for comment.

The Ukrainian government decided in September to cut the pensions of the Chornobyl cleanup and Afghan war veterans as well as elderly people who receive extra compensation for either having fought or worked as children during World War II.

The decision has triggered protests across Ukraine, including in Kyiv. The Donetsk Chornobyl veterans have been protesting since November 15.

Another Chornobyl cleanup worker dies in Donetsky region

(Interfax-Ukraine)—A Chornobyl cleanup worker, who participated in a protest action, died in Donetsk region, Channel 5, reported Dec. 13.

According to the news presenter, the protesting Chornobyl cleanup participants said that the man didn't stay in the protesters' camp for the whole time of the action but came to see them every day from Makiyivka, Donetsk region.

Five days ago he was taken to hospital with heart attacks.

In the early hours of Dec. 12 the man died.

Earlier, Ukrainian veteran of the Chornobyl nuclear disaster cleanup, Gennady Konoplyov, died in Donetsk on Nov. 27, 2011 shortly after police officers forcibly removed a tent camp set up by liquidators in Donetsk to protest cuts in their benefits.

During the operation Konoplyov was shoved by police and died in an ambulance during his transfer to hospital.

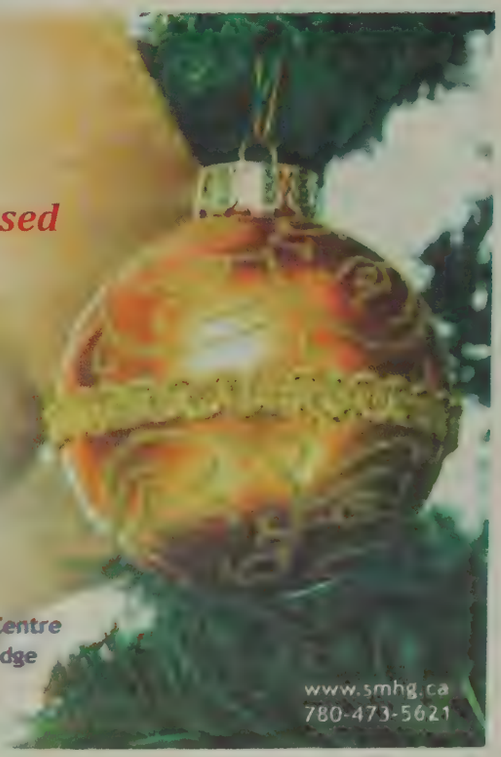
Tymoshenko ivideo causes outrage

(RFE/RL)—A political scandal has broken out in Ukraine over a video showing jailed opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko angrily protesting over being filmed against her will while lying in her prison bed.

The video clip, which was aired on a Ukrainian TV channel, showed the former prime minister waving her arms in anger at a man in a room in the prison's medical wing.

The video clip was one of two aired on TV with the apparent aim of showing that 51-year-old Tymoshenko was being well treated and living in good conditions.

The case of Tymoshenko, a charismatic politician who was sentenced last October to seven years in jail for abuse of office, has caused a crisis in Ukraine's relations with the West. Serhiy Vlasenko, Tymoshenko's lawyer, denounced the filming.



Ivano-Frankivsk Metropolitanate established

(RISU)—On Dec. 13, in Ivano-Frankivsk, the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Patriarch Sviatoslav (Shevchuk), proclaimed the establishment of the Ivano-Frankivsk Metropolitanate of UGCC and enthroned Bishop Volodymyr (Viytyshyn) as its first metropolitan.

According to the Information Department of UGCC, the metropolitan assumed the powers and responsibilities stipulated by Canons 131-139 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches. He will convene the Metropolitan Synod to regulate the questions of the activity of the church in a certain territory, will have a right to consecrate and enthrone bishops of his metropolitanate, ensure the strict observance of the faith, conduct canonical visitations and will establish the metropolitan tribunal.

The newly established Ivano-Frankivsk Metropolitanate includes the Ivano-Frankivsk Archeparchy and Kolomyia-Chernivtsi Eparchy. The Cathedral of Christ's Resurrection in Ivano-Frankivsk is the main cathedral of the metropolitanate.

We, at Ukrainian News, would like to take this opportunity to thank the many businesses and people who have supported us in so many ways throughout 2009. To our readers, donors, advertisers and contributing writers we offer our sincere thanks. May you all have a very Merry Christmas and be blessed with health and prosperity in the New Year.

CHRIST IS BORN!

Editor and Staff of Ukrainian News

ХРИСТОС РАЖДАЄТЬСЯ!

Усім нашим шановним читачам, жертводавцям, підприємцям які підтримують нас своїми оголошеннями та прихильникам пересилаємо найщиріші побажання радісних свят Христового Різдва та кріпкого здоров'я й успіхів в Новому Році.

Видавець та працівники редакції «Українських Вістей»

CUCC Members (L to R): John Iwaniura, Caravan Logistics, Christine Kuzyk, UCEF, Paul Gród, Rodan Energy, Eugene & Renata Roman, Rosewood Winery, Zenon Potichny, Shelton Petroleum, Stefan Merena, Caravan Logistics, Markian Silecky, Carling Energy, Nataliya Pylatyuk, UCU, John Moskalyk, Carling Energy

UCEF applauds CUCC for supporting UCU

(UCEF)—On Dec. 7, Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) representative Nataliya Pylatyuk was thrilled to accept multiple scholarship donations from members of the Canada-Ukraine Chamber of Commerce at their annual Christmas Party. "The generosity of the CUCC members will be greatly appreciated by every student who receives support," stated Pylatyuk. "It allows them to continue their education in a corruption free environment, with very high ethical and moral standards."

Many CUCC members attended a business and professional luncheon, on Nov. 10, featuring guest speakers Fr. Borys Gudziak, Rector UCU, and Yaroslav Rushchyshyn, UCU Senate Member and prominent Ukrainian businessman. The audience listened attentively and appreciated the opportunity to hear about the future plans of the University. The event was sponsored by Buduchnist Credit Union and Dr. Ernest Ewaschuk and it was here that the first appeal for student scholarships was made. Shelton Petroleum, Caravan Logistics and Carling Energy were among the first companies to commit to funding.

Although scholarship support has been strong, UCEF is still looking for 25 more Canadian supporters with the vision to provide an opportunity to a young Ukrainian student.

The day following the luncheon, at a community event sponsored by UCEF, former Etobicoke Centre MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj announced a $1.2 million donation by James Temerty, Canadian philanthropist, founder and Board Chair of Northland Power. The funds will be used to create three Chairs in Ukrainian-Jewish interfaith relations at Lviv's UCU. In addition, Wrzesnewskyj, owner of Future Bakery and M-C Dairy donated $100,000 to the University on behalf of his family. Ukrainian Credit Union, an event sponsor, gave $5,000 and there were multiple donations from individuals who wish to remain anonymous. Event supporters included Plast Toronto Branch, Future Bakery and Natalie's Kitchen.

UCU has been blessed to have strong support from "Friends of UCU' chapters worldwide and in Canada. Plans are being made to strengthen our support through further development of committees in Toronto and Winnipeg. In November, events hosted by Calgary and Montreal 'Friends of UCU' have set the example as what can be accomplished. Pylatyuk had the opportunity to visit both cities in November and attend their functions.

"UCU is very grateful to our friends in Calgary and Montreal for all of their hard work in support of the University's project", commented Pylatyuk. "Thanks to the annual charitable events organized by the FOU Committees over the last three years, UCU is attracting more friends and academic partners, as well as financial supporters from both Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian circles in Canada."

UCEF has been a registered charity in Canada since 2005, and was established to assist the growing needs of the Ukrainian Catholic University, which has more than 1,500 full and part time students. It is the only Catholic university in the former Soviet Union and houses six research Institutes and the Lviv School of Business. It offers excellent 'Semester Abroad' and 'Summer Language and Culture' programs for students from outside of Ukraine.

The generosity of Ukrainian-Canadians and their support for UCU during the 2 month 'Building a University' tour has demonstrated their understanding of the importance of higher education, groundbreaking research and commitment to academic freedom. Their vision in investing in young Ukrainians deserves recognition and applause.

For more information about UCU programs or to make a donation, please contact the UCEF office at ucef@ucef.ca or (416) 239-2495.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Радісних Різдвяних Свят і Щасливого Нового Року!

The Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation wants to thank its donors in North America for their support of the Ukrainian Catholic University throughout the year.

Thanks to your generosity and giving spirit, we are more than confident that the construction of a new UCU campus in Lviv will make a huge impact on educating future leaders for Church and society.

Thank you, dear friends for supporting the Ukrainian Catholic University. Blessings to you and yours during this holiday season!

Дякуємо вам, дорогі друзі за вашу віру в цю прекрасну справу!

Хай Господь в ці Різдвяні Свята щедро благословить Вас та Ваші родини!

UCEF in Canada
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website: www.ucef.org

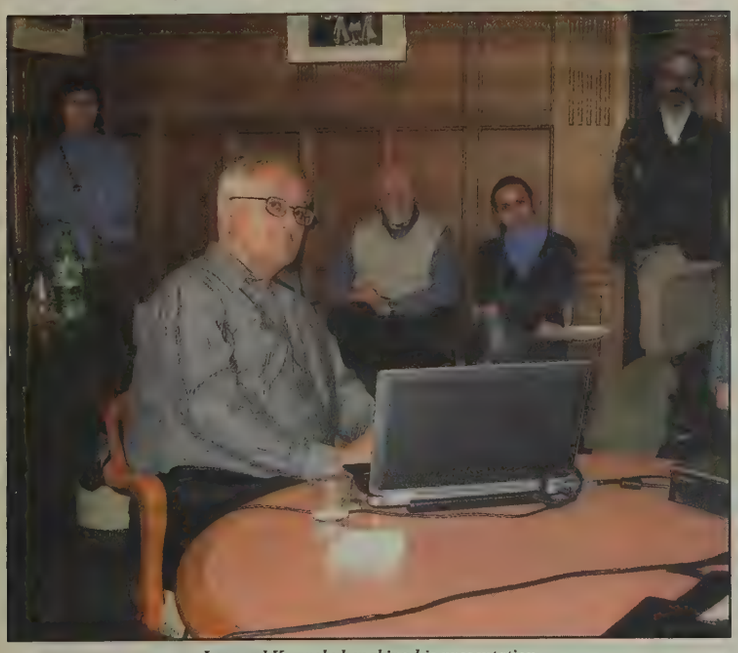
Bethlehem fire comes to Lviv

(RISU)—Dec. 20, Lviv Plast members received the Bethlehem fire of peace from their Polish colleagues. The official handover took place at 1 pm at the Rava-Ruska border crossing.

At 4 pm, it was passed to the Cathedral of St. Yuri where it will be kept. On Jan. 3, it will be passed to other cities. Before that, the fire will be transported to children's homes, orphanages, boarding schools.

On Jan. 3-6, the fire will be passed to all the Churches of Lviv.

According to the representatives of the public organization Plast, the main purpose of passing of the fire is to pass peace, light and good to each home, reported the press-service of the Lviv City Council.



Leanard Krawchuk making his presentation.

Winnipeg collector shows Ukrainian historical postcards at U of A

By Natalia Kononenko

Leonard Krawchuk, an avid collector of things Ukrainian who resides in Winnipeg, visited the University of Alberta in Edmonton during the week of Nov. 29 to Dec. 3. Krawchuk was a nurse by profession, but his passion is Ukrainian folk art. Krawchuk owns an enormous collection. He has costumes from all over Ukraine and has been systematic in trying to acquire at least one example of each type of folk dress from each major cultural region. Krawchuk's costume collection was exhibited in the form of a fashion show in Winnipeg and is currently on display in Saskatoon. Krawchuk has a stunning collection of Hutsul ceramics. He has acquired kylymy (woven rugs), rushnyky (ritual towels), porcelain statues, and paintings. Krawchuk has also collected folk art books and the objects that were the topic of his talk in Edmonton, namely historical postcards, some over 100 years old.

The postcards that Krawchuk collects are primarily photographs. They show folk costumes in natural settings. We get to see what people actually wore a century ago. Some of the postcards are posed and interesting as an indication of how people wanted to present themselves. Examples of the posed category are photographs of wedding couples which were presumably then sent to relatives far away. Other posed photographs show the same person, probably a model, in a several settings. A number of the postcards were actually sent and studying the messages on the back is an interesting future project for Krawchuk himself or for a faculty researcher. Quite a few postcards are in colour. At the time that they were made, colour film did not exist, but a process employing three different filters allowed the production of colour images. Some of Krawchuk's postcards are not photos, but reproductions of paintings.

Krawchuk gave two talks while in Edmonton. One was on the evening of Dec. 1 and featured examples of his postcards with costumes. The other took place as part of a student lunchtime seminar on Dec. 2 and was devoted to architectural photographs. Some were of village scenes and many were of buildings which no longer exist. To present his material, Krawchuk scanned the postcards and showed them as Power Point images. The quality of the postcard photography is good enough to allow enlargement to a large scale. Krawchuk also brought several albums of the postcards themselves which the audience could examine at close range. While in Edmonton Krawchuk was able to satisfy his passion for things Ukrainian with visits to local museums, bookstores, and archives.

Opposition claims political attack

(RFE/RL)—The offices of the opposition Ukraine's Future party have been vandalized and robbed in the central city of Kryvyy Rih in what party officials claim was a politically motivated attack, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reports.

Olena Klementyeva, the Ukraine's Future party's branch leader in Kryvyy Rih, told RFE/RL on Dec. 12 that the offices were attacked early the previous day.

"The vandals broke in despite the presence of security guards [and they] destroyed all our computers and other equipment as well as taking a notebook," Klementyeva said. "The office is on the city's main street and we have a huge commercial sign on our windows. We do not think ordinary criminals would have been interested in doing that kind of thing in the city center."

Klementyeva added that her party has been holding a series of public actions criticizing the local government and that the attack "must have been" connected to the Ukraine's Future party's political activities.

She referred to police in demanding an investigation into the incident.

In November, unknown assailants beat Vitaliy Kupryy, a Ukraine's Future faction leader on the city council of the eastern city of Dniprodzerzhinsk. His injuries were not life-threatening.

Peter & Doris Kule Centre for Ukrainian & Canadian Folklore

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A dramatization of the Nativity scene during Christmas Eve celebration in the Eparchy of Saskatoon.
Photo courtesy of the Ukrainian Catholic Religious Education Centre.

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—Sister Bonnie Komarnicki, S.S.M.I., Co-director, Ukrainian Catholic Religious Education Centre, Eparchy of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

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Поминальний день українського воїна

Михайло Кобилецький

Що-року, в Канаді, 11-го листопада призначено вшановування пам'яті полеглих героїв та ветеранів державного війська. Багато з нас вбирає мак – "poppy" як знак що ми про них пам'ятаємо та не забули. І так, що-року українці торонтонської округи збираються біля пам'ятника в Українському-канадському Меморіяльному Парку щоби вшанувати особливо українських вояків і ветеранів які обороняли свободу України та Канади. Цього року це свято припало в неділю 6-го листопада, улаштовано Конгресом Українців Канади – відділ Торонто, спонзоровано Українською Стрілецькою Громадою Канади. До організаційного комітету увійшли наступні особи - Леся Винницька, капітан Андрій Соханівський, Надя Прокопів, Богдан Ґоґусь та Вероніка і Юрій Сергійчук.

Вимарш почесних гостей, а саме ветеранів, представників Українських Збройних Сил, канадських кадетів і прапорносців різних громадських організацій почалась з подвіря Української Католицької Церкви Святого Священномученика Дмитрія. Провадила оркестра Українських Молодіжних Ансамблів «Авангард» під диригентурою маестра Романа Ясінського. Дійшовши до парку міськими вулицями, почесні представники стали разом із громадою яка численно прийшла вшанувати українського воїна.

ФОТО – PAUL BROWN

Члени Української Стрілецької Громади Степан Пилип'як і Денис Волинець поладають вінок перед пам'ятником поляглиг героїв

Святочна програма почалась із спільною відправою молебня священниками Українських Православної та Католицької Церков. На початок молебня, чоловічий хор Українських Молодіжних Ансамблів "Оріон" під мистецьким керівництвом маестра Ясінського, відспівали «Святий Боже, Святий Кріпкий» разом із супроводом оркестри "Авангард". Відтак, усі присутні спільно молилися за усобших рабів – воїнів які загинули на полі бою. Хор "Оріон" вміло співав молебень а на кінець разом з оркестрою, відспівав стрілецьке «Вічная Пам'ять». Відтак, сурмач оркестри «Авангард» заграв «Останню Прислугу» (Last Post - Reveille) та присутні вшанували воїнів одно хвилинною мовчанкою після якої оркестра «Авангард» заграла молитву "Amazing Grace" в супроводі гри на шотлянські дуді.

Опісля, продовжалася програма із складанням вінків від різних громадських організацій. Програмою провадив капітан Соханівський який попросив наступних організацій до складання вінків перед пам'ятником – від уряду Канади, Посол Тед Опиц; Від уряду провінції Онтаріо Донна Кансфілд; Від українського народу Генеральний Консул України Олександр Данилейко; Збройні сили Канади – майор Михайло Бабин, ветеран Армін Кон та Борис Сірський; Збройні сили України – підполковник Євген Шаповалов і капітан Віктор Хоренко; КУК відділ Торонто – Оксана Рева, Леся Винницька й Юрій Сергійчук; Світова Федерація Українських Жіночих Організацій; Комітет Українок Канади; УСГ Канади; Колишні Вояки Української Повстанської Армії; Братство Колишних Вояків 1-шої Дівізії Української Національної Армії; Українське Козацтво; Крайова Управа Українського Національного Об'єднання і Організація Українок Канада; Ліга Українців Канади відділ Торонто; УНО і ОУК відділ Торонто; ЛУК – відділ Етобіко; УНО і ОУК відділ Торонто – Захід; Братство Українців Католиків Канади, церкви Святого Миколая; Об'єднання Українців Закерзоння; Організація Четвертої Хвилі; Лицарі Колюмба відділ ім. Андрея Шептицького; Уражська Шкільна Рада Торонта, діти з школи св. Миколая; Спілка Української Молоді імені Симона Петлюри відділ Етобіко; Молодь УНО відділ Торонто Захід; СУМ імені Юрія Шухевича в Міссіссаґа; Пласт станиця Торонто

Після зложення вінків, продовжилася програма з хором «Оріон» який відспівав "У Дні Пари Несуть Мари у Далекі Чужині", рецетацією "Борцям за Волю України" Дениса Волинця, член УСГ та славнем "Highland Cathedral" у виконання оркестри «Авангард» та шотланського пайпера. Наступно, виголосив головну промову, пан Борис Сірський, довголітний голова КУК відділ Отава та працівник Міністерства Державної Оборони Канади. Оркестра «Авангард» тоді заграли пісню – "The Proud Canadian Soldier" з вокальним солістом Григорієм Ясінським. На закінчення, від імені КУК Торонто, заключне слово виголосила голова Рева та оркестра «Авангард» заграла славень «God Save the Queen», Український Національний славень та Канадський Національний славень.

Члени Українських Молодіжних Ансамблів Оркестри "Авангард" і Прапорносці ведуть марш-процесію ветеранів, членів Збройних Сил України та представників-прапорносців українських громадських організацій.

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Resident Historian announced for Ukrainian settlement celebrations

(UCC 120 ACC)—The Ukrainian Canadian Congress has announced the appointment of a National Resident Historian, as the Ukrainian community in Canada marks the 120th anniversary of settlement in Canada, and begins preparations for a celebration much larger in scope – the 125th anniversary, in 2016.

"These milestone anniversaries are, in of themselves, historically significant in the life of our community – just as much as the documented events and achievements that we celebrate define Ukrainian Canadians and our collective place in the national history of Canada," says 120th Anniversary Commemorative Committee Chair Roman Brytan. "As we celebrate together, it is vital that we also speak with one voice about the Groundbreakers, Nation-Builders and Trailblazers who contribute to the dynamic, vital role that our community plays in the ongoing growth of Canada as a nation."

Radomir Bilash speaking at the Official Opening Ceremonies of the 120th Aniversary of Ukrainian Settlement in Canada at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, May 23, 2011

Radomir Bilash is Senior Historian for the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, with which he has been associated in a variety of capacities since 1977. Insofar as this world-class historical museum focuses on the first decades of Ukrainian homestead settlement and East-Central town site development, "Radomir is uniquely equipped to provide an accurate, factual context to the region and settlers that started it all," continues Brytan.

He is Project Manager for the Alberta-Ukraine Genealogical Project, and President of the Canadian Association of Ukrainian Ethnology. As author of numerous articles on Ukrainian Canadian culture and history, and researcher/consultant for the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Radomir Bilash also finds time to lecture at the University of Alberta on Early Ukrainian Canadian Culture, as Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies.

"In short," says Brytan, "Radomir brings with him a well-rounded and well-founded understanding of our Ukrainian Canadian identity. This, when seasoned with an array of cultural involvement in the community and a track record in multicultural broadcasting, allows Radomir to readily interpret facts and references in a narrative and contextual manner that can be easily digested by the mildly curious and the intensely academic."

Bilash's first task will be to develop a webpage through the Commemorative Committee and Ukrainian Canadian Congress, which will provide a treasury of gems of factual information and worldwide historical references for anyone looking to find a quotation, an overview, a series of statistics, or a narrative study pertaining to Ukrainians in Canada. He will also be available on an ongoing basis to respond to direct requests for texts, scripts and other materials to be used in Anniversary event programmes, interpretive displays, even works of artistic inspiration.

"For now," concludes Brytan, "we thank Radomir for taking on the role of National Resident Historian, and look forward to the many ways in which he will enable the Ukrainian Canadian Congress to reach out to members and connect with the general community, for a better collective understanding of the past that defines us, and a greater collective appreciation for the future that beckons to us."

Ukrainian Village honoured

(UCHV)—The Communities in Bloom civic pride program has honoured Alberta's Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village at its 2011 national award ceremonies.

Communities in Bloom is a non-profit organization that encourages beautification of green spaces, promotes environmental responsibility and fosters civic pride across Canada.

The award ceremonies were held Oct. 28, in conjunction with the National Symposium on Parks and Grounds in Quebec City. Entries were judged on a series of characteristics: tidiness, environmental action, heritage conservation, urban forestry, landscape, turf and groundcovers, floral displays and community involvement. Judges also shared valuable feedback with entrants on how they could continue beautifying their green spaces.

The Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village received a perfect score of five out of five "blooms" in the special attractions — living history museum category. The site was also nominated for the Home Hardware Community Involvement Award.

Following an evaluation of the site, judges Lisa Tompkins of Toronto and Dorota Joanna Grudniewicz of Ottawa wrote, "There exists an impressive discipline demonstrated by the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village staff in researching and consistently presenting an extremely authentic heritage experience. The adherence to the original master plan since 1971 is exemplary, and is most recently reflected in the sourcing, acquiring and moving of three additional historic buildings to the site in the recent year."

As part of its mandate to showcase Ukrainian settlement in east central Alberta, the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village operates a heritage garden program, raising historical crops such as heritage vegetables and Red Fife Wheat. The program includes accurate historical cultivation, harvesting, processing and preserving techniques. The village also preserves natural areas and accurately portrays settlers' beautification practices.

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Конґрес Українців Канади, Відділ в Едмонтоні сердечно вітає Вас з празником Христового Різдва і Новим 2012 Роком.

Конґрес Українців Канади висловлює найкращі побажання Ієрархам Українських Церков, управам складових організацій, прихильникам. та всьому українському народові на Батьківщині та в діяспорі.

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Новини Едмонтонського відділу МУНО

Анна Лагода

Весною цього року розпочався новий сезон успішної праці МУНО, під керівництвом нової управи, а саме: Голова відділу – Маряна Сех, Замісник голови – Анна Лагода, Секретар – Аллан Маковський, Фінансист - Надія Космина, Член управи – Ірина Цимбалюк.

Від імені нової управи хочемо подякувати попередній управі за чудову роботу і творчу працю.

З перших днів новообрана почала свою роботу. Робота була нелегка, Мар'яна Сех з усіма членами управи приклали багато зусиль щоб спланувати та організувати роботу відділу на 2011-2012 рр. Хочеться пригадати, що ми приймали участь у «Писанка» фестивалі в Веґревілі, Альберта, допомагали на «Днях Спадщини», приймали участь у святкуваннях 120-річчя поселення українців в Канаді, регулярно відвідували збори відділу УНО та Едмонтонського відділу Конгресу Українців Канади. Також, ми успішно провели святкові збори присвячені створенню МУНО в червні 1934. На ці збори ми запросили усіх колишніх МУНівців з Едмонтону і до нас завітали – Маруся Залуцька – колишня танцюристка славнозвісного танцювального колективу «Шумка», член Організації Українок Канади та Союзу Українок Канади, Ліо Залуцький – член Українського Національного Обєднання з 30-річним досвідом, Мирослав Куць -надзвичайно талановита людина, Почесний член Українського Національного Обєднання, засновник «Шумки», власник чудової колекції старовинних, а також своїх власних, українських вишивок. Широко відомий усій українській громаді колекцією писанок, Володимир Гриців – член управи УНО, у минулому - Голова Крайової та Едмонтонської управи МУНО, член драматичного самодіяльного театру УНО «Сузіря» з 2003 року. Юрій Йопик, як Голова УНО, був присутній на цих зборах також. Хочу скористатися нагодою і щиро подякувати всім гостям за участь у наших святкових зборах, котрі розпочалися горнятком запашної кави і свіжоспеченим яблучним пирогом, котрий приготувала Анна Лагода. На цих зборах наш відділ поповнився новими членами. Вітаємо Валентину Олійник, Михася Сех та Катерину Мельник з вступом до МУНО!

Валентина Олійник, Ед Стельмах, Анна Лагода, Володимир Гриців.

Голова відділу, Маряна Сех, як учасниця програми Ріеґ 21 побувала в Nova Scotia, а також на конференції УНО і братніх організацій в Торонт,о де серед багатьох питань зверталася увага на необхідність активізації української молоді та їхнього залучення до відділів МУНО.

Анна Лагода та Валентина Олійник побували на святковому бенкеті КУК Альберти в честь Еда та Марії Стельмах та 120-річчя поселення українців в Канаді. Нам було дуже приємно побувати на цьому заході і поспілкуватися з Едом Стельмахом.

Напередодні Нового року і Різдвяних свят – МУНО активно готується до Коляди і Маланки. 10 грудня відбулося Різдвяне прийняття УНО і братніх організацій, на якому МУНО вітало усіх гостей театралізованим привітанням. Головою культурно-освітнього комітету відділу Анною Лагодою, з допомогою Валентини Олійник та підтримкою Маряни Сех – був написаний сценарій та підібрані костюми для акторів. Дякуємо за чудовий виступ Аллану Маковському та Вікторові Бурану, а також нашим дівчатам.

МУНО усіх Вас вітає з Новим роком, із усіма Різдвяними святами!
Нехай життя із кожним кроком, Ваш дім наповнює скарбами!
Хай сонце радо Вас вітає, кує зозуля літ багато!
Здоров'я з пишним короваєм, приходить в будні і на свято!
Нехай тепло людських сердець, Вам душу щиро зігріває,
І переможних справ вінець, хай Вашу голову вінчає!

Колишні Мунівці з Мар'яною Сех і Анною Лагодою на Різдвяному прийнятті.

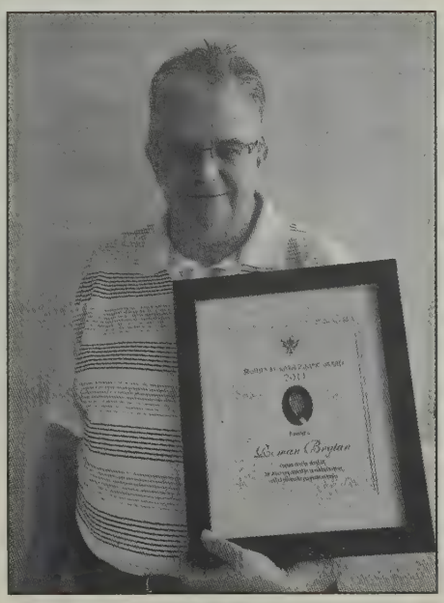
UCC congratulates Brytan for CEMA award

(UCC National)—The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) has congratulated Roman Brytan on being awarded the prestigious Sierhey Khmara Ziniak Award by the Canadian Ethnic Media Association. Brytan is a well-known radio personality and is active in the Ukrainian Canadian community, including chairing the UCC's 120th Anniversary of Ukrainian Settlement Committee.

Brytan received the award at the Canadian Ethnic Media Association (CEMA) Journalism of Excellence Awards Gala in Toronto, Dec. 10. The Ziniak Award, named for CEMA's founder, is given by CEMA for excellence in ethnic journalism is awarded to the person who through journalism has championed Canadian multiculturalism.

"Roman Brytan is a very deserving recipient for his decades of continued support for and contribution to multicultural media in Canada," stated UCC National President Paul Grod. "Roman's commitment to the Ukrainian community and to a multicultural and inclusive Canada are a model to us all. His leadership in this regard was on display this year as we celebrated the 120th anniversary of Ukrainian pioneer settlement in Canada where he successfully chaired the UCC's committee."

"On behalf of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, its Board of Directors and the Ukrainian Canadian community I would like to congratulate Roman and wish him Mnohaya Lita," concluded Grod.



Roman Brytan with his award.

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Jurors selected for 2012 Kobzar Award

(UCFTS)—Jurors have been selected for the 4th Biennial Kobzar Literary Award, sponsored by the Shevchenko Foundation, which will be held, March 1, 2011 at the Palais Royale in Toronto.

They are Denise Chong, Nino Ricci, Randall Maggs and M G Vassanji.

Chong is best known for her award-winning *The Concubine's Children*, one of the first non-fiction narratives of a Chinese family in Canada, and a Globe and Mail bestseller for 93 weeks. Her second book, *The Girl in the Picture*, about a girl who survived a napalm attack in the Vietnam War, was also ground breaking in its portrayal of life in war-torn Vietnam. Both books were finalists for the Governor-General's award for literary non-fiction. Denise's most recent book, *Egg on Mao* spans 20th century China, pivoting on a bus mechanic's defiant act in defacing Mao's iconic portrait during the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. Additionally, Denise Chong's work has been important to the study of Canada as reflected in a speech that she delivered entitled "Being Canadian" which has been widely anthologized, in books such as *Who Speaks for Canada: Words that Shape a Country* by D. Morton and M. Weinfeld (1998) , and *Great Canadian Speeches* by D. Gruending (2004). Denise holds three honorary doctorates from York University, Bishop's University and the University of Northern British Columbia

Ricci's novels have been published to critical acclaim around the world. They include the *Lives of the Saints* Trilogy, adapted as a miniseries starring Kris Kristofferson and Sophia Loren, and *Testament*, a fictional reimagining of the life of Jesus. His most recent novel is *The Origin of Species*, which earned him the Canadian Authors Association Fiction Award as well as his second Governor General's Award for Fiction. He is also the author of *Pierre Elliott Trudeau*, a biography that forms part of Penguin's *Extraordinary Canadians* series. Ricci has taught workshops and held writing positions at institutions across Canada and the U.S., including York University, the University of Windsor, John Carroll University, Bridgewater College, and Colorado College. He has served on the faculty of The Humber School for Writers since 1992. He is also a past president of Canadian PEN, the writers' human rights organization. In 2006 Ricci was the winner of the Alistair MacLeod Award for Literary Achievement, and in 2010 of York University's Pinnacle Achievement Award. He was recently appointed to the Order of Canada.

Born in Vancouver, Maggs has lived for the last 34 years on the west coast of Newfoundland where he taught Literature at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. He is the author of two collections of poetry, *Timely Departures* (Breakwater 1994) and *Night Work: The Sawchuk Poems* (Brick 2004), and co-editor of two anthologies pairing the poetry of Ireland with that of Canada and Newfoundland & Labrador. His work in Ireland won a Coracle Fellowship from Memorial University. He is also artistic director of Newfoundland's March Hare Festival of Words and Music and sits on the board of the Province's Arts Council. The Sawchuk Poems was launched at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto, at the Canadian Embassy in Dublin and in Winnipeg in conjunction with Oseredok and Winnipeg's Ukrainian community. The book won the 2008 Winterset Award, the 2009 E.J. Pratt Poetry Award and the 2010 Kobzar Literary Award. It was also listed as a Globe and Mail 100 top book of 2008.

Vassanji is the author of six novels, two collections of short stories, a travel memoir about India, and a biography of Mordecai Richler. His work has appeared in various countries and several languages. He is winner of the Giller Prize (1994, 2003) for best novel in Canada; the Governor General's Prize (2009) for best work of nonfiction; the Harbourfront Festival Prize; the Commonwealth First Book Prize (Africa, 1990); and the Bressani Prize. *The Assassin's Song* was also shortlisted for India's Crossword Prize. He is a member of the Order of Canada.

Vassanji was born in Kenya and raised in Tanzania. Before coming to Canada in 1978, he attended MIT and the University of Pennsylvania, where he specialized in theoretical nuclear physics. From 1978-1980 he was a postdoctoral fellow at the Atomic Energy of Canada, and from 1980 to 1989 he was a research associate at the University of Toronto. During this period he developed a keen interest in medieval Indian literature and history, co-founded and edited a literary magazine (*The Toronto South Asian Review*, later renamed *The Toronto Review of Contemporary Writing Abroad*), and began writing stories and a novel. In 1989, the publication of his first novel, *The Gunny Sack*, ended his active career in nuclear physics.

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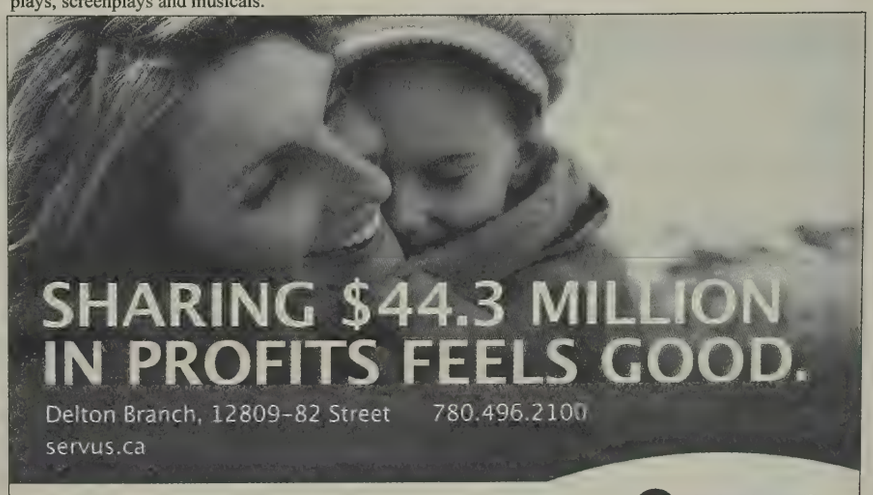

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Галичина — була і залишається українським П'ємонтом

Дагмара Турчин-Дувірак,
пресовий референт НТШ.

Приїзд до Торонто Міхаеля Мозера – це завжди велике свято для української громади. Доктор Мозер є професором слов'янської філології Віденського університету, так само як і Українського Вільного університету в Мюнхені і Католицького університету ім. Петера Пазманія (Пілшчаба/Будапешт). Видатний славіст, автор численних праць в ділянці східньослов'янського мовознавства, він сам визнає, що українська мова посідає особливе місце в його житті. Саме сьогодні, коли українська мова знаходиться в сумній, якщо не критичній, ситуації в Україні, глибоко наукові, об'єктивні дослідження проф. Мозера мають надзвичайну вагу для її захисту. Останніми роками проф. Мозер вже двічі виступав в НТШ в Торонто. В 2007-му році він доповідав на тему ролі Галичини у формуванні української літературної мови, а в 2009-му – про мову Тараса Шевченка. На цьогорічній доповіді, яка відбулася 9 листопада в Галереї КУМФ, що на Блюр в Торонто, проф. Мозер знову повернувся до улюбленої галицької теми.

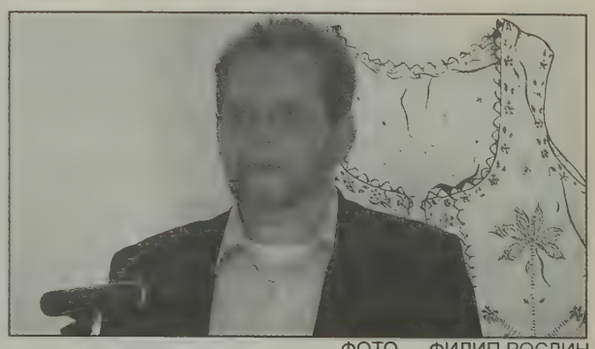

ФОТО — ФИЛИП РОСЛИН
Професор Міхаель Мозер

Властивою причиною візити проф.Мозера до Торонто була презентація двох нових книг, присвячених розвитку української мови в підавстрійській Галичині. Перша з них - "Українська мова в Галичині: історичний вимір "– це збірник розвідок, опублікований 2011 року на основі конференції, проведеної у Львові в березні 2008 року. Збірник залучив широке коло науковців з України, Польщі, Австрії, та висвітлив найрізноманітніші аспекти проблеми розвитку української мови на галицьких теренах. Оскільки за браком місця годі охарактеризувати всі 11 матеріялів збірки, коротко зупинимося бодай на кількох з них. Так, у статті М.Мозера "Русини" й "русинська мова" в галицьких граматиках першої половини XIX ст." досліджується мовна свідомість галицьких інтелектуальних еліт на основі перших граматик руської мови, написаних І. Могильницьким, Й. Левицьким, І. Вагилевичем, Й. Лозинським, та Я. Головацьким. Розвідка Тетяни Ястремської (Львів) подає детальну карту українських говірок у Східній Галичині. Цікава стаття Януша Рігера (Варшава) розглядає впливи української мови на польську. Пилип Гофенедер (Відень) обрав предметом свого дослідження мову галицьких проповідників XIX ст. Вивченню формування української філософської термінології присвячена праця Марини Гьофінгофф з Відня, а медичну темінологію дослідила Ганна Дидик-Меуш зі Львова. На загал, матеріяли збірки переконливо доводять надзвичайно важливе, якщо не вирішальне, місце Галичини у розвиткові української мови, і, як наслідок, у формуванні української національної свідомості.

Властиво, утвердженню цієї ідеї цілковито присвячена і друга книга, презентована проф. Мозером – його монографія "Український П'ємонт?", опублікована цього року Львівським університетом ім.І.Франка в серії "Університетські діалоги". Почавши свою розвідку з питання "Чи була Галичина українським П'ємонтом?", проф. Мозер спочатку досліджує історію поширення цього гасла. Своїм походженням воно, імовірно, завдячує Володимирові Антоновичу, а утвердженням – Михайлові Грушевському, котрий в 1906 р. у статті "Український П'ємонт" писав про Галичину як "ту всеукраїнську фабрику, де мусить вести ся національна робота для цілої України".

Далі проф. Мозер переконливо доводить, що Галичина таки була українським П'ємонтом, і стала вона ним не лише на поч.XXст, а набагато раніше – від 20х років XIX ст., від вже згаданих раніше перших руських граматик. Відтоді галичани розпочали свідому і цілеспрямовану працю над придатною кодифікацією мови, розбудовою словництва та функціональних стилів, творення загальновизнаного у всіх регіонах "високого" різновиду національної мови, та поширення її серед всіх членів української спільноти. Навіть такі завзяті "великоукраїнські"критики галичан як Борис Грінченко і Іван Нечуй-Левицький, як виявилося, в більшості своїх закидів не мали рації: як показала сучасна мовна практика, багато, на їхню думку, галицьких "неоковирностей" (серед них – слова *звертатися, людство, дійство, явища,п опит,підприємство,свідомість, розпач, настрій, відродження*, - і таких слів є сотні!) стали органічною часткою української нормативної мови. У 1920х роках, коли гасло П'ємонту перехопили в Радянській Україні підчас т.зв. "українізації", і нарком освіти Микола Скрипник опублікував статтю "УРСР – піємонт українських трудящих мас", галичани продовжували грати значну роль у розвитку української мови. Так званий "скрипниківський" правопис, затверджений 1928 року, був наслідком певного компромісу великоукраїнських і галицьких правописних традицій.

Коли ж у 1930х Сталін згорнув всі процеси українізації і розпочав нещадний терор проти української інтелігенції, галичан одразу заклеймили як "буржуазно-націоналістичних шкідників", що свідомо займалися "засміченням" української мови та відриванням її від "братньої російської мови". Фактично, така політика продовжувала вестися в Радянському Союзі аж до його розвалу. Нажаль, ведеться вона і сьогодні, і не лише у "братній" Росії , але й в незалежній Україні, де при владі стоять відверто антиукраїнські політики, що войовниче ворожо наставлені до галичан як уособлення "австрійської", чи "німецької", чи "американської", чи якоїсь іншої інтриги. Однак, як би не оцінювали галичан українофоби, вони, галичани, справді зробили величезний внесок у всі аспекти української мови, і це переконливо довели ґрунтовні дослідження проф. М. Мозера. На його глибоке переконання, Галичина таки була – а з огляду на теперішній мовний простір України, де лише в галицьких теренах українська мова продовжує функціонувати "у всіх царинах щоденного життя і у всіх прошарках суспільства" (М. Мозер) - і залишається і сьогодні незборимим українським П'ємонтом.

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Winnipeg hosts conference on Ukrainian Canadians during WWII

(CIUS)—A group of scholars met in Winnipeg on Nov. 11–12 to examine issues related to Ukrainian Canadians and the Second World War. The gathering was a joint initiative of the Kule Ukrainian Canadian Studies Centre at CIUS, the Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies at the University of Manitoba, and the Oseredok Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre in Winnipeg. Additional financial support was provided by the Wasyl Topolnicki Memorial Fund and the U of M's Department of German and Slavic Studies.

Dr. Roman Yereniuk Dr. Roman Yereniuk talking to a recent immigrant from Ukraine, now serving in the Canadian Militia, during the Remembrance Day commemoration.

The well-attended event featured 10 presenters from various parts of Canada who addressed a wide range of topics that stimulated lively discussion, engaging the audience and session chairs alike.

The conference was introduced by Jars Balan (CIUS Kule Centre) with a recitation of a 1903 poem by the pioneer-era community activist Michael Gowda, who argued in his work that Ukrainian immigrants would only be recognized as fully "Canadian" once they had fought and shown readiness to die for their adopted country. It was this notion of the need to make a "blood sacrifice" that partly inspired the title of the conference: "Becoming Canadian: Ukrainian Canadians and the Second World War."

The first session opened with a presentation by Orest Zakydalsky (UCRDC) about oral interviews with Ukrainian Canadian service personnel held by the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre in Toronto. Although the collection is small (37 interviews) and not wholly representative, it nonetheless provides some revealing insights into the motives and experiences of those who joined the Canadian Armed Forces. Dr. Serge Cipko (CIUS Kule Centre) followed with a look at wartime coverage of Ukrainian Canadians in the Edmonton Journal and the Edmonton Bulletin, noting that two organizations in particular — the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association and the Ukrainian Canadian Committee — received considerable attention from the mainstream press. Other articles of interest included death notices, obituaries, and wedding announcements (among them reports of local Ukrainian women marrying Americans stationed or working in the Edmonton area during the war years), as well as accounts of the involvement of Ukrainians in all aspects of the war effort.

A short Remembrance Day ceremony was held at 11:00 a.m., hosted by Borys Gengalo, a former major in the Canadian Militia. The commemoration featured a video presentation about the participation of Canadian forces in conflicts and peacekeeping duties since the First World War; a reading of a memoiristic sketch describing the experiences of a Winnipeg veteran named Joseph Malyna, who sought unsuccessfully to join the elite "Devil's Brigade"; and the recitation of a special prayer composed for Ukrainian Canadian troops by the Rev. Semen Sawchuk while he served as a chaplain in the Canadian Army.

The second session of the day dealt with "the war before the war." Dr. Myroslav Shkandrij (U of M) examined events in Carpatho-Ukraine in 1938–39. He noted the huge expectations of Ukrainians in Canada and elsewhere in the diaspora that this tiny territory would serve as the nucleus of a future Ukrainian state, as well as the general willingness of Western politicians and pundits to accept the legitimacy of this fledgling autonomous territory before it was militarily suppressed. Balan then discussed how the image of the Soviet Union evolved in the course of the 1930s from that of "Red Scare" to the friendly "embrace of the Russian Bear." Using stories drawn from the English Canadian press, he showed how with the help of skillful propaganda and because of the growing threat posed by Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, the image of Joseph Stalin and his Bolshevik regime gradually turned from that of a menace to Western democracies into that of a lesser evil, setting the stage for the view of the Kremlin as a trusted ally during the Second World War.

The third session put a distinctly human face on the war. Suzanne Holyck-Hunchuck (independent scholar, Ottawa) spoke about "Three Brothers in Service," basing her presentation on her own family history, supplemented with contextual research. Peter Melnycky (Alberta Culture and Community Services) then focused on Alberta Ukrainians decorated for distinguished service in the Royal Canadian Air Force. His talk included the story of Russell Bannock (born Slawko Bahniuk in Edmonton in 1919), one of Canada's most decorated but largely unrecognized wartime pilots. He also shared excerpts from the poignant correspondence between another Alberta airman and his parents back home, in which the former made a conscious effort to write in Ukrainian even though his grasp of the language was imperfect.

At the last session of the first day, Andrij Makuch (CIUS Kule Centre) spoke about the effect of the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which forced the Ukrainian Canadian pro-communist Left to do a complete about-face from the "United Front" against fascism that it had been promoting since the mid-1930s. Needless to say, this put Soviet supporters in an incredibly awkward and dangerous position. He was followed by Jody Perrun (Royal Military College), who looked at "The War within the War" between Ukrainian Canadian nationalists and communists in Winnipeg from 1939 and 1945, basing his observations on research for his doctoral dissertation.

Participants reconvened after dinner for a screening of the 1943 Hollywood curiosity The North Star. The film ostensibly dealt with the impact of the Nazi invasion of 1941 on the inhabitants of a collective farm in Soviet Ukraine. In retrospect, the film was an obvious showcase for the views of Hollywood's leftist sympathizers (among those involved in the production were the writer Lillian Hellman and the composers Aaron Copland and Ira Gershwin), and it comes across as a wooden, somewhat Soviet-style propaganda piece. Other highlights of the evening's theme-related program were a contemporary newsreel and a Donald Duck cartoon ridiculing Hitler and the Nazis.

On the second day Roman Yereniuk (CUCS, U of M) started off with a detailed description of the Ukrainian chaplaincies in the Canadian forces during the Second World War. A total of seven Ukrainian clergymen, four Orthodox and three Catholic, served in this capacity, all of them behind the lines and toward the end of the war. They were especially active during demobilization.

The final presentation was delivered by Thomas Prymak (Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Toronto), who spoke about Gabrielle Roy's "Steven," a prominent figure in her posthumously published memoir, Enchantment and Sorrow. Dr. Prymak sensitively documented the love affair between the Manitoba-born Roy and the Alberta-born Ukrainian Canadian Stephen Davidovich, who met in England on the eve of World War Two. The intense romance was shattered by the sudden and unexplained disappearance of Davidovich, an operative for the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists who was given a secret assignment in Europe. Things would never be the same once he returned to England. Dr. Prymak had been tracing the contours of this story since the 1980s, when he was working on his book Maple Leaf and Trident, and his thoroughly researched and moving tale was very well received by the audience.

Final comments were offered by Sophia Kachor (Oseredok), who noted that competing "nationalist" and "Canadian" threads often appeared in the presentations. As for the question of whether the conference had attained its objective of stimulating new research on Ukrainian Canadians and the Second World War, she suggested that "time will tell," but that this event had demonstrated considerable interest and a remarkable level of knowledge about the field.

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Landik's victim complains of 'lies' as he lashes out at her

By Svitlana Tuchynska, *Kyiv Post*

During a court hearing on Dec. 13, Roman Landik — on trial for allegedly beating a young woman in an attack caught on videotape — appeared to have a breakdown and started screaming demands that he be shot since he "cannot take it anymore'. "

Then he lashed out at his victim. "She (Maria Korshunova) is going to the dentist to treat her teeth, and I have eight cavities in my teeth. When will I get treated?"

Korshunova, a 20-year-old woman from Luhansk who used to work as a model, told the Kyiv Post that the July 4 incident changed her life. "I was waiting to hear from two big modeling agencies. But after the whole scandal and all the lies that were spread on the Internet about me, they cut all communication," Korshunova said, adding that she currently is jobless and "clueless about what to do next in life." Korshunova said that while she has recovered physically from the assault, she has a lot to cope with emotionally.

"It is very hard psychologically to come to the court hearing every day and listen to all the lies about me and what happened that night. The defendant says that the video is fraud, that I attacked first, that he was only protecting himself. They completely change the sequence of the events," she said. "I think they are trying to drag out the process."

Landik, the 37-year-old son of a Ukrainian lawmaker, is charged with assaulting Korshunova in a Luhansk restaurant. He has exhibited bad behaviour since the assault and charges.

On Dec. 8, Landik attacked a journalist in court. While on his way to the courtroom, Landik hit the camera of 1+1 TV channel with his head. The impact was so strong that the battery fell off and the video record was broken. According to a statement by 1+1, the station is considering a lawsuit against Landik to recover damages.

The Landik family has reportedly paid Korshunova, Hr 320,000 – some $40,000. But that hasn't made the criminal charges of disorderly conduct goes again. Landik is held in a Luhansk jail.

He is the son of Volodymyr Landik, an influential member of parliament from the ruling Party of Regions.

The assault touched off a public debate over the impunity with which Ukraine's rich and powerful behave. Much of Landik's sustained, 20-minute assault on the woman in the Bakkara restaurant was caught on the business's surveillance camera.

The surveillance camera footage show how Landik starts an angry conversation with Korshunova and then hits her on the face. After she hits him back, Landik starts beating and dragging her by her hair across the floor.

Landik is claiming in court that he was "trying to detain her for assaulting him." His father also said that the video footage is fraud and has threatened to sue journalists who run the story.

Korshunova was treated in a hospital for a concussion, damaged vertebra and bruising. She later told 1+1 TV channel that, before beating her, Landik was verbally assaulting her.

After the prosecutor's office opened a criminal case against Landik, who was member of Luhansk city council at a time, he fled the country and was soon detained in southern Russian city of Krasnodar. On Aug. 11, he was extradited to Ukraine and since then has been held in a detention centre.

Volodymyr Landik, Roman's father, is not without controversy as well. He went into national spotlight on March 12 when his bodyguard assaulted a traffic police officer after Landik's car was stopped for speeding.

First Landik denied the incident, then accused the Internal Ministry of conspiring against him. Then he apologized publicly and offered compensation to the police officer.

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Natural gas talks with Russia collapse

(Ukrainian Journal)—Talks between Ukraine and Russia over lower natural gas prices suddenly collapsed on Dec. 12, forcing Gazprom to postpone indefinitely an agreement it had earlier planned to sign before the end of the month.

"There will be no New Year presents," Alexei Miller, the CEO of Gazprom, said in Moscow, Interfax reported.

The comment comes hours after Miller's meeting with Ukrainian Energy Minister Yuriy Boyko and days after Prime Minister Mykola Azarov had issued his concerns over the country's energy security.

The development underscores a major change of tone for Gazprom, which has issued a special statement just seven days ago to announce the agreement will "probably" be signed by the end of the month.

Ukraine has been seeking to lower gas prices to $230 per 1,000 cubic meters, down from $401/1,000 cu m currently.

The lower price was expected to help Ukraine save $6 billion annually beginning in 2012, but the collapse of the talks means the government will have to either reduce gas imports or cut other spending to balance the budget.

The gas talks were so far were handled by Boyko and were directly supervised by President Viktor Yanukovych.

But Azarov, after seeing the final draft of the agreement on Dec. 5, has refused to support it citing energy security concerns, Dzerkalo Tyzhnia reported Dec. 10 citing a source.

With Gazprom now turning much less optimistic about the agreement, Azarov has ordered to create a team of negotiators with Russia to make sure Ukraine's energy security is protected.

The team will be led by Boyko, but will also include members of the Foreign Ministry, the Finance Ministry, the Economy Ministry, the State Property Fund and the Justice Ministry.

The team will begin a new round of negotiations with Russia after the Azarov government approves a set of instructions to make sure the country's energy security and other important issues are not compromised, according to a person familiar with the issue.

Vladyslav Lukianov, a lawmaker from the governing Regions Party, on Dec. 12 accused Russia for refusing to lower the gas prices and said the development may worsen relations between the two countries.

"If Russia intends to trade friendly relations between our people then I think this is a short-sighted policy," Lukianov said. "This will only create atmosphere of distrust and will worsen relations between the people in the future."

The final draft agreement, which was rejected by Azarov the previous week, called for the creation of two 50-50 joint ventures between Gazprom and Naftogaz Ukrayiny, according to Dzerkalo Tyzhnia.

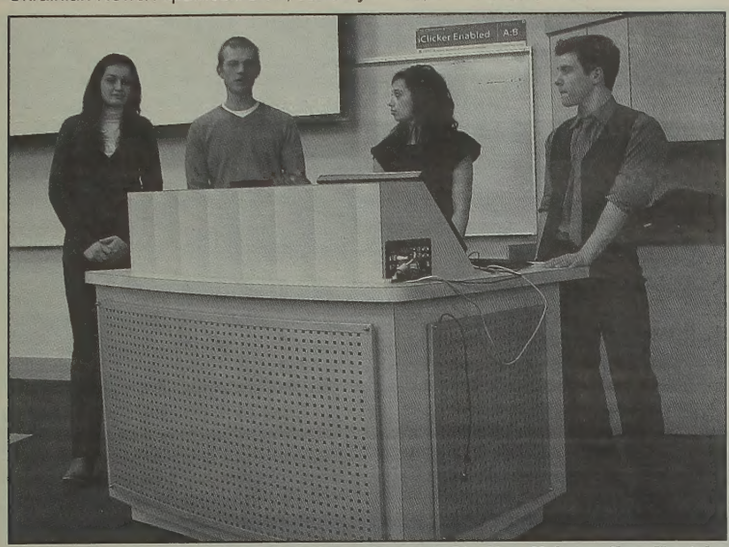
One joint venture would handle transit of Russian gas to markets in Europe via Ukrainian gas transportation system, while the other one would supply gas to Ukrainian consumers, the newspaper said.

Russia apparently also insisted on registering the gas transit joint venture in a third country to avoid its jurisdiction in Ukraine, according to the newspaper.

Ukraine originally suggested creating a trilateral joint venture, including Ukraine, Russia and the European Union, to operate the gas transportation system, according to a person in the Yanukovych administration.

Serhiy Pashynskiy, a lawmaker who advised former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko on energy issues, criticized the Ukrainian authorities for their attempts to please Russia to try to win lower gas prices. He said that Russia would only ease the pressure after Ukraine surrenders its gas transportation system, and that is unacceptable.

"There will be no compromises with the Kremlin until the agreement, in black and white, stipulates that the gas transportation system is under control of the Kremlin," Pashynskiy said. "There will be no gas price concessions until this happens."



Students answering questions from the audience (L-R): Vira Holiyan, Ihor Kotsiuba, Dominika Lirette and Stephan Pacholok.

Donor generosity recognized at student seminar

(CIUS)—The establishment of a new University of Alberta-Ukraine Student Exchange Endowment Fund was announced at a student seminar held at the University of Alberta's Telus Centre on Nov. 20. The event was co-organized by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, the Alberta Society for the Advancement of Ukrainian Studies, and the Ukrainian Students' Society.

"The purpose of the fund," said CIUS director Dr. Zenon Kohut, "is to offer scholarships at the undergraduate or graduate level to students from the University of Alberta and universities in Ukraine to study abroad for one or more semesters at a partner university with which the University of Alberta has a valid student exchange agreement." The exchange program between the U of A and the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv has been in existence since 2006, and more than a dozen students have benefited from it.

That same year CIUS launched an appeal to the Ukrainian community to help establish an endowment fund in order to sustain the program and defray the expenses involved in studying abroad. To date, CIUS has received many small donations from 49 donors in Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario, Manitoba, and the United States, totalling more than $15,000, which have made it possible to establish the fund and begin using its proceeds.

The third student seminar on this academic exchange, titled "Ukraine and Canada as Witnessed by Students," followed the announcement. It offered the best evidence of the considerable benefits of the exchange to participants. The seminar featured first-person accounts by participants from the University of Lviv, Vira Holiyan and Ihor Kotsiuba. Also participating were U of A students Stephan Pacholok and Dominika Lirette, who took the course "Ukrainian Through Its Living Culture" offered annually in Lviv by the Ukrainian Culture, Language and Literature Program in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies (MLCS). Pacholok and Lirette were recipients of the Ivan Franko School of Ukrainian Studies Ukraine Travel Award at CIUS, which helped defray the cost of their travel to Ukraine. Both programs give students the opportunity to study abroad and gain new life experiences, improve their language skills, and make new friends.

In their joint presentation Holiyan and Kotsiuba, both from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, spoke about their experience at home and compared it with their studies in Edmonton. They noted the importance of the balanced and well-structured curriculum at the U of A, course options, private rather than public announcement of grades, the greater openness and friendliness of Canadian professors, and active student participation in class. They also emphasized that courses they attended at the U of A tended to be more practically oriented than those in Ukraine, which stress knowledge of theory. The students had little difficulty with the English language, since mathematical terminology is universal. The Ukrainian students also liked the U of A campus, where all facilities are in one place. In Lviv, by contrast, university buildings are scattered across the city. U of A libraries were also, in their view, convenient to use and usually had the required books available.

In everyday life, Ihor and Vira noted the comfort and convenience of Edmonton. They were impressed by Canadian hospitality and attracted by informal student culture, as manifested in casual clothing and eating habits.

Pacholok (Faculty of Science) and Lirette (Faculty of Arts), along with other students from the U of A, took the MLCS summer course "Ukrainian Through its Living Culture," which has been offered for the past 11 years. They found studying in Lviv an unforgettable experience that allowed them to learn their ancestral language through immersion in an authentic Ukrainian-speaking environment and everyday experience. They attended regular classes taught by Dr. Alla Nedashkivska, walked around the city, attended plays and concerts, and went to cafes and restaurants. The students were charmed by the rich cultural life of Lviv and its historical sites. Most important, they noticed a significant improvement in their Ukrainian language skills after the course. There were also very emotional moments when participants met their families, and Lviv was an excellent base from which to travel the country.

The seminar attracted a sizable audience, including students, donors, professors, and community members. Dr. Zhi Jones (Associate Director, Education Abroad Program, U of A International) noted the role of her department in promoting international education and opportunities to obtain financial support. Dr. Colm Renehan (Associate Vice-President, Office of Development) acknowledged the unique achievements of the Ukrainian community in Canada and praised its commitment to the support of worthwhile projects.

CIUS regards the growth of the new University of Alberta-Ukraine Student Exchange Endowment Fund as one of its priorities and encourages the community to assist in this endeavour. The short-term goal is to increase the capital of the fund to $30,000, earnings from which could fund one annual scholarship of $1,000. The long-term goal is to reach $100,000, which could provide two annual scholarships of about $1,800 each. Currently, this amount would suffice to cover the cost of travel between Ukraine and Edmonton. (If writing a cheque, please specify that it is in support of this program.) For further information, please contact CIUS by phone at (780) 492-2972 or by e-mail (cius@ualberta.ca).

Kyivan Patriarchate gives up on unification with UAOC

(RISU)—The unification process between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyivan Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, which began last autumn, failed.

According to the Kyivan Patriarchate, the clergymen of the UAOC are to blame for the failure of the dialogue. Representatives of the Kyivan Patriarchate particularly accuse Metropolitans Mefodii and Andrii, who laid down an unacceptable condition, the resignation of Patriarch Filaret. On Dec.13, in Kyiv, the bishops of the UOC-KP at their synod passed an address stating their position in this regard, reported the website of UOC-KP.

The bishops reminded in the document that the two churches made repeated attempts to unite.

"The first attempt to unite was made in 2000-2001, when Symphoniticon was signed at the residence of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople and later agreements were reached at a meeting in Ternopil. However, these agreements did not result in unification as the head of UAOC, Metropolitan Mefodii and some other bishops laid down the condition of resignation of Patriarch Filaret of Kyiv and All Rus for the unification. This condition was also laid down was during the second attempt of dialogue in autumn, 2005," reads the address.

The bishops of the Kyivan Patriarchate cannot accept these conditions by any means as they view Patriarch Filaret as one with the biggest experience of the bishop's ministry. In addition, they consider the dismissal of Patriarch Filaret to be "the dream of the Moscow Patriarchate of many years," which they now try to fulfill "through the mentioned representatives of UAOC."

The Synod of UOC-KP reminded that many representatives of the higher ranks of clergy of UAOC were once part of the Kyivan Patriarchate but left that church due to conflicts.

"Metropolitan Mefodii in 1995, was the administrator of UOC-KP, Metropolitan Andrii was a permanent member of the Holy Synod in 1992-1995. Most of the present bishops of UAOC are former priests of the Kyivan Patriarchate who left our church for the sake of obtaining the positions of the bishops."

UOC-KP rating higher than UOC-MP's

(RISU)—According to the results of the National Sociological Survey of the population of Ukraine, conducted by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation and Ukrainian Sociology Service company from Nov. 22 to Dec. 6, 2011, the most popular religious denomination in Ukraine is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC-KP).

In answer to the question about their religion, 23.1% of respondents identified themselves as non-religious; 31.1% called themselves faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyivan Patriarchate, and 25.9% faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate. Of the respondents, 8.5% identified themselves as part of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, 1.7% as faithful of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, 1.1% as faithful of the Roman Catholic Church, 1% as Protestants, and 0.2% as Muslims. There was no answer for 6.2%. For the survey, 2,012 adult respondents were questioned. Statistical error is within 2.2%.

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By Yulia Bondarenko
Kyiv-Mohyla University
Intern to Ed Komarnicki, Saskatchewan
2011 Maria Fischer Slysh Scholarship recipient
And Andriy Mironenko
Lomonosov Moscow State University
Intern to Megan Leslie, Nova Scotia
2011 Mazurenko Family Scholarship recipient

On Sept. 15, 34 Ukrainian interns arrived in Canada to participate in the 21st annual Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Program. The Internship Program, established by Toronto attorney Ihor Bardyn, gives university students from Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora the opportunity to serve a 2-month internship with a member of the Canadian Parliament or Senate.

This year students from the University of Rome, Ostroh University, Kyiv-Mohyla University, University of Lviv (Ivan Franko), Lomonosov Moscow University, University of Kharkiv (Vasyl Karazin), Yaroslav the Wise Law Academy, Kazan Federal University, Moscow Linguistic University, Humboldt University of Berlin, University of Kyiv (Taras Shevchenko), Kyiv Polytechnic, Lviv Polytechnic, Yuriy Fedkovych University of Chernivtsi, Karpenko-Karyi Kyiv University of the Arts, Vadym Hetman University, Ukrainian Catholic University, University of Flensburg, Ternopil National University, Maastricht University, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian University, Kyiv School of Economics, Petro Mohyla Black Sea University, University of Luhansk (Taras Shevchenko) and the University of Toronto were working as Interns on Parliament Hill.

During the two months, the Interns attended the tribute to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and meetings at the Embassies of Poland, Russia, United Kingdom, United States and Ukraine, and participated in workshops on the Rule of Law and Civil Society at the Migus Seminar in Quebec and at the University of Ottawa and St. Paul University. They held workshops with Senator Raynell Andreychuk, MPs Fin Donnely (British Columbia), Peter Stoffer (Nova Scotia), Brian Masse (Ontario), Deepak Obhrai (Alberta), Peter Goldring (Alberta), James Bezan (Manitoba), Shelly Glover () and the Hon. Wayne Easter (PEI).

Other students completing Internships came from Canadian Universities, as well as from France, Israel, United Kingdom, and the United States and from the Jewish-Canadian community. The Canada-Ukraine was the largest Internship Program in the Canadian Parliament, as it traditionally has been for the past 21 years, only surpassed by the USA in some years.

The interns added to their understanding of parliamentary democracy by attending Question Period, ParliamentaryStanding committee meetings, house debates and meetings with NGOs. They also attended Ukrainian community events and performed volunteer work with several of Ottawa's food banks and homeless shelters. An integral part of exploring Ottawa was the visit to the new Taras Shevchenko monument.

The interns hosted a traditional Ukrainian evening at the Embassy of Ukraine at which Robert Sopuck, Chair of the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group, presented certificates of participation signed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to each intern. As a part of Ukrainian Day on Parliament Hill, the interns presented a concert of Ukrainian songs in the Rotunda of Centre Block of Parliament.

Inspired by the effectiveness, tranparency and accountability of the Canadian political system, a new generation of Ukrainians is being prepared to lead the establishment of the rule of law and civil society in Ukraine.

Kononova awarded IPC's Best Paralympic Games Debut

Sports

(IPC)—At the young age of 19, Ukraine's Oleksandra Kononova put on a stellar performance at the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games, winning gold medals in the 12.5km Standing Biathlon and 5km and Sprint Classic Cross-Country Skiing events.

She also picked up a silver in the 3x2.5km Cross-Country Skiing race.

In honour of a performance that nobody anticipated, Kononova was awarded the title of Best Paralympic Games Debut for the International Paralympic Committee's (IPC) 2011 Paralympic Sport Awards, which are proudly partnered by Allianz, the IPC's international partner.

The Ukrainian beat three other finalists for the award: Russian biathlete and cross-country skier Maria Iovleva; American Ice Sledge Hockey player Nikko Landeros; and Swedish visually impaired cross-country skier Zebastian Modin.

"It was my debut, and I was ready for everything," Kononova said of her Vancouver 2010 performance. "I really hoped to get at least one gold medal."

The award was given to the athlete that stood out the most in his or her first-ever Paralympic Games at Vancouver 2010.

PHOTO — LYUBA GALYUK

Oleksandra Kononova at thr British Columbia Ukrainian community's farewell dinner for members of Ukraine's Paralympic Team, March 20, 2010. The event was organized by Lyuba Galyuk, attache to the team and Myrna Arychuk of Solaway Travel/Solovei Magazine.

It was presented during the Paralympic Awards Gala on Dec. 10 in the Intercontinental Hotel ballroom in Beijing, China. Kononova was not in attendance, as she is awaiting the arrival of her new daughter.

"Despite the fact that my family is about to have a (baby), and I know that it will be a girl, I'm not going to break away from the training process for a long time and of course will be actively preparing for Sochi 2014," Kononova said.

"This is a great incentive for me before Paralympic Games in Sochi."

Kononova was infected with osteomyelitis – a bone marrow infection – as an infant, leaving her right hand shorter than her left one. But she has been participating in Ukrainian skiing cups since she was 14 and has not let anything stop her.

Despite having problems with her hand co-ordination once in a while, it does not compensate her will to win, as she said she wants her achievements to be an inspiration to all people with an impairment both in Ukraine and around the world.

"This award is extremely important for me and for the Paralympic Committee of Ukraine because it opens the door to the world of people with disabilities, who, unfortunately, still don't have an easy access to physical culture and sport – and very often are found within the four walls of their apartment," Kononova said.

Vitali Klitschko to fight Chisora in February

WBC heavyweight champion Vitali Klitschko will fight Britain's Dereck Chisora on Feb. 18 at the Olympiahalle in Munich, the Ukrainian said on Dec. 14, reported Reuters.

The 27-year-old Chisora was twice scheduled to fight Vitali's younger brother Vladimir, who holds the WBA, IBF, WBO and IBO titles, but the Ukrainian pulled out injured both times.

"Chisora has shown, not only in his last fight which he lost, that he is comfortable with bigger opponents," Klitschko said in a statement.

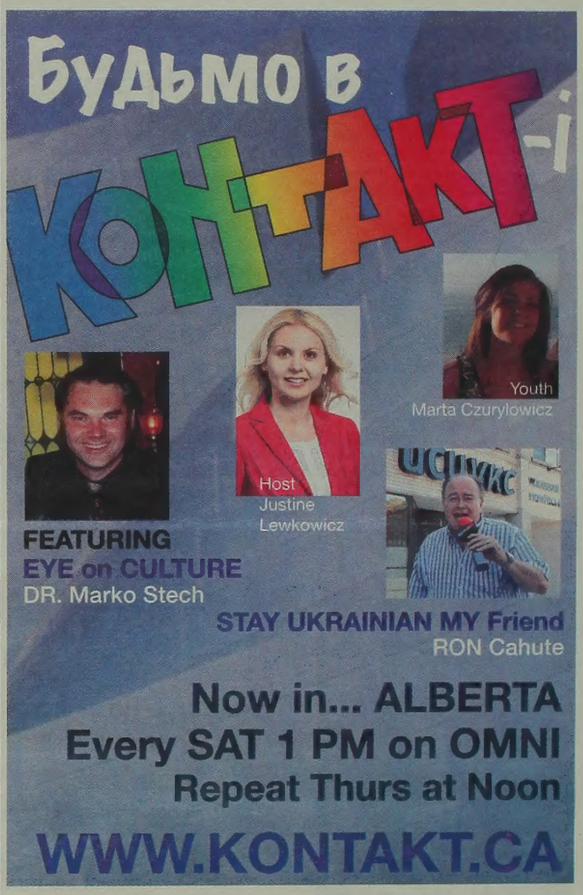
"I have been warned and I will prepare meticulously and will not be distracted by big talk," said Klitschko, who has said he will retire after a few more fights.

Vitali, 40, knocked out Poland's Tomasz Adamek in his last fight on September 10 while Chisora was beaten on a split decision by Robert Helenius in a European title challenge on December 3.

Chisora also lost his British and Commonwealth titles to compatriot Tyson Fury in July.

"I will show Vitali Klitschko that his time is up and will send him into retirement," Chisora said.

"If his younger brother then dares to face me in the ring then I will bring all title belts to London."



Dynamo down and out after Maccabi draw

(UEFA)—FC Dynamo Kyiv were eliminated from UEFA Europa League after surrendering a two-goal lead and being reduced to nine men against Maccabi Tel-Aviv FC, Dec. 14.

Dynamo needed a sizeable victory and a Stoke City FC win at Beşiktaş JK to have a hope of reaching the last 32. For a while it was on the cards as they raced into a 2-0 lead courtesy of Seran Yeini's own goal and Oleh Gusev, while Stoke forged ahead in Istanbul. Yet two red cards either side of Omer Vered's strike, and Elran Atar and Munas Dabbur had seemingly earned Maccabi a first Group E triumph when Gusev equalised late on. Beşiktaş's 3-1 victory over Stoke made it all academic, however.

Dynamo started on the front foot and forged ahead on 12 minutes. Olexandr Aliyev's free-kick was met by Leandro Almeida whose header was diverted into the bottom left-hand corner by Maccabi captain Yeini. The hosts doubled the lead five minutes later, as Betão found space down the left and picked out the lurking Gusev. Dynamo came close to a third before the break but Ideye Brown failed to convert Andriy Yarmolenko's low cross.

Dynamo's qualification hopes were dashed within minutes of the restart. Almeida was sent off for bringing down Elran Atar, who was through on goal, and Gal Alberman's resulting free-kick fell kindly for Vered to rifle into the roof of the net. Moments later Yuri Semin's were reduced to nine when Yevhen Khacheridi received his marching orders for an off-the-ball altercation.

Atar struck Maccabi's equaliser just past the hour before Dabbur capitalised on a Denys Garmash mistake to complete the comeback and eliminate the hosts. Gusev denied Nir Levin's charges their first Group E win late on, although there was time for both sides to spurn further glorious chances.

Hannover return to winning ways against Vorskla

(UEFA)—With their place in the UEFA Europa League knockout stage draw already assured, Hannover 96 signed off with a welcome home victory over Group B's bottom side FC Vorskla Poltava, Dec. 15.

The hosts were six games without a win before tonight but began brightly and were good value for their 2-0 lead inside 33 minutes, with Konstantin Rausch and Didier Konan Ya on target. Roman Bezus gave the visitors hope with a penalty on the cusp of half-time, but after Rausch had squandered a spot kick at the other end Artur Sobiech restored the cushion 12 minutes from time, sealing a much-needed win.

Clear-cut chances were at a premium in the opening quarter but Rausch injected some urgency into proceedings with an opportunistic opener on 25 minutes after Sergio Pinto pounced on Yevhen Selin's stray pass. Pinto was also instrumental in Hannover's second, as his cute flick eluded the Vorskla defence; Konan Ya's goal-bound shot took a wicked deflection off Volodymyr Chesnakov and flew past the helpless Serhiy Dolganskiy.

With half-time approaching and Mirko Slomka's men threatening to run riot, the visitors were thrown an unlikely lifeline when Mario Eggimann brought down Ahmed Januzi; Bezus coolly tucked away from the spot. Rausch was less clinical 11 minutes after the restart as Dolganskiy dived to his right to tip his effort round the post, but a home victory was never really in doubt.

Sobiech, 21, made sure with his first goal for the club, applying a simple tap-in after Konan Ya had sprung the offside trap and squared to the unmarked Polish striker. Vorskla bow out without a win; Group B runners-up Hannover may be pushed harder in the round of 32 in the new year.

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Ukraine to host European basketball championship in 2015

(Interfax)—Ukraine has received the right to host the European basketball championship in 2015.

FIBA Europe President Olafur Rafnsson announced the decision by the FIBA Europe Board in Munich, Germany, on Dec. 18.

On Dec. 14, France, Croatia, Germany and Italy withdrew their joint bid to host EuroBasket 2015 citing "doubts regarding the professionalism and the lack of trust in the bidding process conducted by the European Basketball Federation, FIBA Europe."

Ukraine was the only candidate to host EuroBasket 2015 after the withdrawal of a joint bid by Croatia, France, Germany and Italy.

The proposed EuroBasket 2015 venues are in the cities of Kharkiv, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk and the capital Kyiv for the first round with Odesa, Lviv and again Kyiv hosting the second round and the finals.

Earlier, President of the Basketball Federation of Ukraine Oleksandr Volkov noted that EUR 180 million would be allocated for preparations for the tournament.

The Ukrainian delegation in Munich included Deputy Prime Minister and Infrastructure Minister Borys Kolesnikov, President of the Basketball Federation of Ukraine Oleksandr Volkov, President of the National Olympic Committee of Ukraine Serhiy Bubka, Director of Euro 2012 Tournament in Ukraine Markiyan Lubkivsky, head coach of Ukraine's national basketball team Mike Fratello, Ukrainian basketball player and two-time NBA champion Stanislav Medvedenko, and Head of the State Service for Youth and Sports Ravil Safiullin.

Metalist draw puts AZ through

(UEFA)—AZ Alkmaar are through to the UEFA Europa League round of 32, but goal difference alone kept them above FK Austria Wien following their 1-1 draw with Group G winners FC Metalist Kharkiv, Dec. 15.

Metalist goalkeeper Oleksandr Goryainov shone on a rainy night in the Netherlands, making save after save to deny Gertjan Verbeek's enterprising side victory. Metalist took the lead late in the first half with Marko Dević beating Esteban Alvarado on a rare foray forward, but while Adam Maher responded within seconds, Goryainov was not to be beaten again.

With the bulk of their South American stars given the night off, Metalist were not their usual, sparkling selves, and the Dutch league leaders were given the run of the field. Goryainov must have had an inkling of what was to come after he was called on to deny Nick Viergever and, from the rebound, Maher, early on with Roy Beerens further testing the 36-year-old's reflexes with an angled blast.

Metalist converted their first presentable chance, Dević turning Oleg Shelayev's ball into the net after AZ failed to clear a corner. The 18-year-old Maher replied within a minute, finishing at the near post after Etienne Reijnen charged for the byline to flip the ball into his path. AZ were on the up, and Rasmus Elm fired just wide from distance and hit the bar with a mighty free-kick before the break.

Goryainov earned his luck, though, saving brilliantly from Beerens and Elm just after the hour, and then flinging himself full-stretch to fend away Jozy Altidore's goal-bound effort. With news filtering through that Austria Wien, 2-0 winners at Malmö FF, would not be able to overturn their inferior goal difference, AZ eased off and protected their point in the closing stages.

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Brussels Bureaucrats besotted with boxer Klitschko

(RFE/RL)—Brussels is used to seeing political heavyweights sparring over foreign policy or fighting for budget allocations. So it takes a slugger like Ukrainian boxing champ Vitali Klitschko to be able to knock out the hardy pros in the European Commission.

While waiting for a meeting with the EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fuele, a large number of Eurocrats lined up to get an autograph (for their children of course) or have their picture taken with the current holder of the WBC heavyweight belt, Nov. 26.

Even the commissioner himself seemed a bit in awe and asked if he could pose in front of the cameras in a "boxing position" with both fists raised. Klitschko politely declined saying that "he doesn't fight friends."

Dr. Ironfist, as Klitschko is known, has been an avid supporter of closer ties between the EU and Ukraine but his ringside success has so far not translated into support at the polling booth.

His party, the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform (UDAR), which he has headed since last year, will probably not get over the 5 percent threshold needed to enter the country's parliament next year.

Klitschko has complained that he doesn't get enough coverage in the political media at home. Maybe his sparring partner Fuele and his starstruck staff in the Commission could help him with that.